Creativity, Community and Selfhood: Psychosocial Intervention and Making Art in Cape Town

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Abstract

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The context for my research has been a multicultural art studio complex and other workshops that are connected through the various actors utilising and facilitating them. My research has sought to map the role of psychosocial intervention in the organising and managing of these organisations, the aims and intentions of them, and the minutiae of daily interactions between the different actors involved. Psychosocial intervention is a form of pastoral care based on the belief that a whole community or nation can be in need of psychological healing. Healing is considered to be realisable through facilitating self-realisation. Psychosocial intervention also shares much similarity with the saliency of art-making as held by many art educators and therapists, with the idea that art-making is a necessary activity for the promotion and development of healthy individuals and communities. Psychosocial intervention lends itself well to requests for facilitating cross-racial communication. This has much pertinence in Cape Town where it is drawn on as a resource in a society striving to shed its segregated past and embrace multiculturalism.

In this context making art comes to have a moralistic role in the moulding of responsible individuals. Art-making is believed to represent self-knowledge, and artists deemed successful are those whose art can be considered to reflect this. This is achieved through using art techniques and practices which privilege representing the individuated self, rather than commenting on broader socio-political issues, and is commonly conceived as being a form of abstraction, accompanied with rhetorical declarations alluding to personal liberation. It is not rebellious or threatening to the project of building a new sanitized multicultural community, which is the expected outcome of participating at the studio-complex for a period of time, or experiencing the intense rite of passage entailed in participating at a workshop. Although this notion of art-making is drawn on by various groups in Cape Town as a means to becoming successful artists, its main beneficiaries are white South Africans, particularly women, who have come to have influential roles as facilitators of psychosocial projects in and beyond Cape Town's art community.

Notions of transformation and realisation are common parlance in psychosocial intervention and are used to describe the experience of art-making, and are evocative of liberation but also the avant-garde. However, the realisation of these ideals is more complex than the simplistic declarations allow for. I argue that psychosocial intervention comes to act, not only as a guide in the managing of interactions, but also as a buffer in the dissemination and practice of criticism; a phenomenon, which I argue has the potential to be an agent in the challenging and redistribution of power in Cape Town's art community, as well as more widely. Emotional literacy is favoured over intellectual literacy, as it is assumed to be more inclusive. This plays into perceived notions of feminine virtues while denying socio-economic differences, which has consequences for the manifestation of (white) power in Cape Town.

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Acronyms

ANC	African National Congress
BCM	Black Consciousness Movement
CAP	Community Arts Project
CAW	Community Arts Workshop
EAF	Emerging Artists' Fund
JAF	Johannesburg Art Foundation
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
PAGAD	People Against Gangsterism and Drugs
RC	Rape Crisis
SANG	South African National Gallery
TAT	Triangle Arts Trust
TRC	Truth and Reconciliation Commission
UCT	University Cape Town
WESSA	White English-speaking South African

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Anyone expecting to see a battery of contemporary South African art will, I regret to say, be disappointed. This thesis seeks to consider the context in which art is made and the significance of what is said about what is being made.

Introduction: Creativity, Community and Selfhood

Notions of creativity as an enabler of the self have been extremely pertinent in South Africa, where desires to express oneself and struggles to define one's own identity have been suppressed for various reasons. The utilisation of creativity in processes of empowerment and projects that are perceived to effect changes upon oneself, have been desirable among many urban artists in South Africa. Thupelo Art Project started in 1985, with the aim to give artists the opportunities to interact and network with other artists, developing skills and self-confidence through experimenting with other artists' techniques, appropriating this exposure to others' creativity to their own searchings for identities (collective, individual and artistic). Access to creativity, became a means to developing an artistic vocation, a meaningful career in the sense that one's career *should* be meaningful to one's *whole* self; the understanding being that creativity allowed one to express the truth about oneself (see Taylor 1989: 4). This, so the story goes, was artists empowering themselves through identifying what needs they require(d), in order to achieve the sense of being truly creative, which in turn, was believed to lead to a more fulfilling professionalism. The possibilities to (re)make one's identity, to be self-determining, came with concerns for what it is to be a responsible artist, this new consciousness evoking feelings of responsibility to oneself as I just alluded to, but also to others, acting as facilitators for others to achieve self-empowerment through creativity.

This investment in creativity as a form of self-help has proved to be particularly salient in South Africa, where the black majority have been disadvantaged, making Thupelo, with its belief in art as a means to achieving self-empowerment, seemingly very localised. Yet, it is also important to note that Thupelo is part of an international umbrella organisation called Triangle Arts Trust (TAT), which has its base in London. TAT promotes interaction between visual artists within and between countries, which consist of two-week long workshops, residency programmes and studio-complexes. The Thupelo Workshops were modelled on the Triangle International Artists' Workshops that had been held annually in upstate New York since 1982, having been founded by the sculptor Anthony Caro and Robert Loder.[1] The "triangle" had

[1] A British businessman working in South Africa between 1957 – 1965, who became very involved in the performing and later the visual arts in the country (see Burnett 1995: 64 and Peffer 2001 for further biographic details).

originally been the UK, the eastern seaboard of USA and Canada. Caro and Loder had actually met in Johannesburg, and the first Triangle workshop was based on the needs that they had found there, where artists were working in isolation (Peffer 2001: 113). TAT was founded on the principle that artists needed to meet as equals and share their experiences in making art (Loder 1995: 26). These workshops lasted for just two weeks; "it was always Caro's firmly held view that it was the intensity of the experience not the duration that was important for the artist" (ibid.). The workshop concept is simply meant to bring together a diverse range of mid-career artists to work together, "where creative energy [is] compressed together" (Loder 2000: 2). Participants are often described as being of "mid-career", having either left art school some years before, or who have been working as professional artists for a number of years, but are not yet selling successfully. It is at this time that an "injection of creativity" is considered to be beneficial to an artist's development. A further characteristic is for the workshops to take place in an isolated location, which was considered to help establish an intense atmosphere out of which creativity could flourish. The workshops usually bring together between 20 and 25 participants, half of whom will usually be from the host country and half will be from an ever-expanding international network of artists who have connections with TAT.[2]

The privileging of "creativity" and "creative energy" is there to ensure an emphasis on process rather than on finished artworks. This is apparent in the name Thupelo, a Sotho word, meaning to "teach by example", which alludes to the considered importance of privileging practice over theorising, in an understanding that this is to be inclusive. Moreover, participants are considered to be both "teachers and learners simultaneously" (Loder 2005: 14), where learning takes place through mutual exchange. Equally important to the presentation of TAT is the belief that the workshops are artist-run; "the initiative and energy of participating artists has been the foundation of the enterprise" (ibid.). It is these characteristics that are considered to enable TAT, in its local manifestations, to build a sense of community (ibid.: 16) and also to privilege informality. This quality is idealised as a means to create "a level playing field amongst artists, between those working with little or no academic background in art-making and those having studied at formal art institutions (ibid.).

[2] See www.trianglearts.org for a full list of workshops, residencies and studio complexes in TAT.

In South Africa, the differences between artists who have been academically trained and those who are self-taught is often simplified in terms of race (where being black is reductively equated with being self-taught and white with academic training), thus what is considered to be so important about Thupelo is its ability to break down racial barriers because of its non-academic character. This thesis will seek to unpack such declarations of equality and egalitarianism, as they are manifested in Cape Town's section of TAT.

In Johannesburg, 1991, the Thupelo workshops were terminated, as it was felt that they had served their purpose, and what was needed instead was a place where the creativity that had been "unleashed" at the workshops could be supported more permanently. A studio complex called the Bag Factory was opened, and was one of the first dedicated spaces for artists in Johannesburg (Xinisteris and Doepel 2001), consisting of 18 studios. The Bag Factory has come to be one of the most important locations in the Johannesburg and South African art community (Smith 2001). It is also drawn on as epitomizing Johannesburg post-1994 as a "free, lively, multicultural and relatively mixed hub" (Roberts 2002: 8). Yet, while the Bag Factory is recognised by many as being central to the Johannesburg art scene,[3] there is another dynamic at play, which has been greatly encouraged by individuals running the facilities. They have sought to reconcile the need for providing substantial resources, necessary for artists to have successful careers with concerns about what it is to be responsible artists and thus also citizens. This entails a shift from simply being involved in an international art scene to also "engaging in street-level opportunities and artist-led support structures" (Smith 2001). As will become apparent, this concern has come to be central to the characteristic of TAT in Cape Town, where it has particular consequences because those in positions to "give back" tend to be white and female.

One participant from the Johannesburg workshops, Jill Trappler, decided to organise Thupelo workshops in Cape Town, bringing together a working group of participants from the Johannesburg workshops, based in Cape Town. Local (or regional) workshops were held between 1991 and 1994, before the first international workshop

[3] Artists at the Bag Factory include David Koloane, Kay Hassan, Sam Nhlengethwa and Pat Mautloa – all are also veterans of the Johannesburg Thupelo workshops.

in 1995. In 1998, a studio complex was established called Greatmore Art Studios. These workshops in conjunction with Greatmore, aimed to continue the needs for interaction and experimentation that were characteristic of the Johannesburg facilities. Nevertheless, this thesis is based on the particular intensity of certain characteristics of TAT in Cape Town. The individuals running Greatmore and Thupelo endorse the conviction that art-making has the power to better and transform individuals and communities through a therapeutic emphasis on process. This conviction leads to the assumption that art-making is beneficial to everyone, and needs to be promoted. This is a shift from the early workshops, which simply considered art-making to enable artists to speak the truth about oneself; as such, art-making assumes a moralising purpose, rather than simply advocating artistic professionalism and expertise. This also comes to be supported by liberal white residents of Cape Town, for it fits into their conception of racial harmony. The intensity of these characteristics of TAT in Cape Town needs to be considered in relation to the particular context of Cape Town.

For while a further central feature of TAT is that all facilities operating under its umbrella should adapt to particular local needs and concerns, what makes Greatmore and Thupelo so distinctive is the preoccupation with finding a role for white South Africans in the new South Africa. In 1990 Julie Frederikse published a book, *The Unbreakable Thread*, in which she collated evidence of the role white South Africans have had in striving to realise an inclusive South Africa from 1652 until 1990 when apartheid was beginning to be formally dissolved, providing evidence of a long tradition of non-racialism in South Africa. However, this is utopian in its avoidance of the raced realities of power relations that remain in place, and of "the neo-apartheid aspects" of South Africa's current national situation (Distiller and Steyn 2004: 10). I intend to critically engage with declarations of cross-racial and non-racial interaction in post apartheid Cape Town's liberal art community, of which Greatmore and Thupelo have a central role. Inequalities within this "unbreakable thread" of racial harmony come to be apparent under a close investigation of the means by which interaction between different races is realised. I will argue that interaction is guided by the phenomenon of psychosocial intervention, which is seemingly compatible with the extent of racial segregation that still exists in Cape Town, as Jonathan Freeland recently commented (2005) and accompanying power inequalities.

Psychosocial intervention is the term I have given to the peculiar phenomenon, whereby white South Africans have felt able to partake in the "new" South Africa, while simultaneously resisting change. Psychosocial intervention can be defined as being a psychological understanding of social problems, but which is Western, or more specifically, an Anglo-American strategy in origin. Activities under its rubric range from "trauma counselling to peace education programmes, to life skills, and self-esteem-building initiatives" (Pupavac 2001: 359). Under its remit, an individual's emotional state is no longer a personal matter, "but becomes public property and related to the responsibilities of citizenship" (ibid.: 361). This is possible through the contradictory aims at the heart of psychosocial intervention; Vanessa Pupavac explains that this is possible through being "expressed in terms of self-actualisation, empowerment or psychological well-being, the disciplining aspects of [psychosocial intervention] are not immediately apparent" (ibid.: 368). Contemporary psychosocial policies reference the self, and so "incursions into individual autonomy are paradoxically made in the name of self-empowerment and self-actualisation, and against authoritarian practices and the authoritarian personality" (2003: 161). Instead, people are encouraged to seek self-realisation through processes of life-long learning and continual self-improvement (2002a: 59).

Embarking on pastoral care initiatives, through the opportunities made available by psychosocial intervention, has seemingly been extremely compatible with "natural" characteristics of women. Truida Prekel observes the important roles that women will increasingly have in the new South Africa, including being educators and developing and building communities (1994: 3 – 4). In popular conceptions of "women" there resides a "slippage between women-as-citizens within the state and women-as-mothers or carers within the nation" (Manicom 2005: 44). Such characteristics have also found themselves to be closely connected to the art world in South Africa. I will suggest that while these female characteristics are considered to be universal, it is actually white women who are being referenced (after Frankenberg 1993). White women come to consider themselves, and indeed, find themselves in positions where they can take on the role of nurturing a new multicultural nation into being, as is evident in literature aiming to celebrate women in South Africa, which are organised by and reference predominantly white women (Reynolds and Richards eds. 2003 and Laubscher ed. 1999). White women have also found themselves to be working (paid

and voluntary) in Cape Town's inclusive arts community, where Thupelo and Greatmore are located, and where creativity is conceived as concerning self and community development and transformation.

The issues at stake in the realising of a multicultural South Africa from this position are such that to be realisable, fear of historical and/or political collective forms of belonging need to be neutralised. The formula for achieving this has been conceived as individualising identity, building an emotionally literate self through psychosocial intervention. This search for selfhood is considered to represent responsibility, and individuated selves are then considered safe to bring together. Psychosocial intervention comes to manage interaction, by defusing other allegiances, social and political. The search for selfhood has been a popular project with white South African artists (Herreman 1999: 181) and writers (Nuttall and Coetzee eds. 1998), but has been called on as a means by which all South Africans can be reconciled. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) has had a significant role in centring this individualising of experience. The importance it gave to the act of confession had the consequence of individualising suffering, hence suppressing collective emotions (see Wilson 2001 and Manganyi 2004a). The reducing or transforming of "political tensions into the less inconvenient form of 'individual' pathology" (Littlewood 1992a: 41) is considered to be possible through holding a "notion of common humanity which – in theory at least – encompasses us all" (ibid.). The division between this theoretical declaration and the concrete realising of such ideals goes to the heart of my thesis.

Instead, liberal therapeutic interpretations of political reconstruction in South Africa have come to be realised through psychosocial intervention, which reifies notions of transformation and belonging. As such, while notions of art-making in community environments are seemingly emblematic of progressive thinking and policies (see Bennett 1993), any questioning over the quality of art produced or other criticism of such initiatives has come to be considered as criticism of the "new" South Africa in general. In this context intellectualism (as a form of dissent) is seen as antithetical to the implementation of policies at the grassroots, and has been marginalized in an insistence that it is not relevant to "the more direct, more total and therefore more significant relationships of community" (Williams 1983: 92). But community is to be

realised through individualising identity, and art-making is called on to bring this about.

Art-making comes to have a central role in the production of individuated selves, where it is considered to be an excellent way of bringing about self-realisation and knowledge. This has meant that art-making has come to be described through therapeutic language. This is to take an instrumentalist approach, where art-making is central to constructing a particular moral self that does not comment on wider socio-political issues instead, art-making comes to have a moral aim. Both art educators (such as Read 1958) and therapists (Case and Dalley 1992) have drawn on art as a means of gaining self-knowledge and understanding, yet particular interpretations of both professions have shifted to focus on notions of self-realisation, self-esteem and empowerment, which come under another elusive term, lifeskills. This notion has been divorced from its revolutionary basis, as conceived by the Brazilian educator, Paula Freire (2004). In South Africa, art-making has been drawn on as a resource in "offering knowledge, skills, attitudes and values South Africans require as individuals and citizens, as lifelong learners and as economically productive members of society" (Education White Paper 1998 and see White Paper on Arts, Culture and Heritage 1996).[4] This is about producing morally ethical selves, and speaks more of conformity than revolution – because or in spite of the revolutionary connotations in rhetoric used by grassroots facilitators, who tend to be white and female.

Research Aims and Methodology

My research problem is to discern the extent of, and consequences entailed in the use of therapeutic endeavours in an art organisation and network in Cape Town. This is to consider the relationship between psychosocial intervention and moralistic ideas of making art, which considers making art to be a lifeskill. As such, I anticipate my thesis to contribute to research on ethics, human rights, identity, including race and gender politics as well as ethnographies of liberalism. My research has taken the form of an institutional ethnography,[5] which has enabled me to consider the practices of meaning-making – as relating to psychosocial intervention and art-making – in the

[4] In the UK, culture secretary Tessa Jowell recently spoke of the necessity of children "releasing their creative potential" (Kennedy 2005) for the good of the nation's future.
[5] Further institutional and biographical information can be found in appendix B.

specific historical and social context of Cape Town in the early 2000s. In such a context, critical ethnography can contribute in making "explicit embedded logics, so that social actors increasingly become more agents of their own will, but within some sociological frame [...] changing the social *within* the social" (Willis and Trondman 2000: 11, original emphasis). As such, this research aligns itself with a recent manifesto, the aims of which include: "utilising theoretically informed ethnographies to expand the resources of knowledge and information which social actors use to understand their own position and the likely consequences of particular courses of action, so absorbing concepts and theories *about* them *into* their actual practice" (ibid. original emphasis).

Before travelling to Cape Town I had spent a year and a half carrying out archival research at Gasworks for TAT and indirectly, myself. This research entailed archiving details of all the workshops and studio-complexes to date operating under the umbrella of TAT. My time in London, researching at the headquarters of umbrella organisation, enabled me to gain a strong grounding in the aims and endeavours of TAT as a whole, from which I would be able to consider the specific context of Greatmore and Thupelo. This role also enabled me to be introduced to Greatmore by Robert Loder, after which I was able to negotiate with the main gatekeepers of Greatmore (and therefore also Thupelo) to carry out research. I spent 12 months in Cape Town from June 2002 to May 2003, returning in August 2003 for a further month, to observe changes to Greatmore following a period of upheaval. Two Thupelo workshops took place during this time, in October 2002 and February 2003. I also spent two weeks in Johannesburg, visiting The Bag Factory and carrying out archival research on the Johannesburg Art Foundation.

As my intention was to understand the motives and aims central to the institutions, and the impact they had on artists, my research demanded that I balance my time between working with the (white) management and artists (white and black). The need to negotiate this balance meant that it was impossible for me to take on the role of being a full-time volunteer – which would have entailed working in the (white) office, and becoming identified as a member of the white management. To this extent, I needed to carefully negotiate a means by which I could be a participant observer. For, while in the context of a small informal institution, volunteering

appeared to be the most suitable role to adopt; to be able to work with artists necessitated keeping some distance between my role as a researcher and that of the management/administration. This meant that I needed to adopt different roles in order to get access to different types of data (Hammersley and Atkinson 1995: 109).

There was another important reason for resisting the assumption that I would adopt the role of volunteer during the course of my research. Psychosocial intervention can in part be characterised by its non-reflexivity; Vanessa Pupavac explains that trust in external psychosocial intervention is "an article of faith", and that the "benefits of psycho-social intervention are assumed [...] rather than backed up by research" (2001: 365). Thus, my role as researcher was potentially a contentious one. Research was generally considered to be in conflict with the necessity of white people to "give back", and the alleged urgency and immediacy associated with the need or even demand for "giving back" to be implemented. To help others is taken as a gospel truth; its suggestive power is considered to be self-justifying (see Gronemeyer 1992: 55). Moreover, "the mere gesture of giving is sufficient these days for it to be characterised as help – irrespective of the intention of the giver, the type of gift, or its usefulness to the recipient" (ibid.). In South Africa help is given to those entitled "previously disadvantaged" by those who we can perhaps call the "previously advantaged" (Hassan 2000). Help and help to self-help are considered ways to create interaction between widely differing social groups. The demand that I be a volunteer was also very much a part of the reaction to my whiteness, age and being female; young women from overseas wanting to work voluntarily with black people were not by any means unusual. The impact on the giver was believed to be profound, leading to the elusive notion "self-growth" (as has been apparent with the recent BBC series *Grown-Up Gappers* 2005). However, it was precisely these issues that I intended to consider during the course of my research, and was made possible in part by a peculiar paradox.

Both my time at Gasworks and Greatmore were also characterised by extreme openness towards me; indeed there was a real wish to be accountable both in London and Cape Town. At both locations, I was encouraged to access a huge variety of documentation, office space was given to me, and I was trusted with keys to both institutions. At Greatmore, this openness was expressed in terms of wanting to be

accountable, even suggesting that criticism can help both individuals and organisations to "grow". However, this declaration for openness is also characteristic of an allegiance to psychosocial intervention – where criticism is allegedly desired yet simultaneously feared. As will be discussed in this thesis, mantras over giving and receiving criticisms are more complex than the declarations allow for. My reaction has been to take this desire to be accountable literally, and to endeavour to show how criticism can be effective and useful. As Hal Foster has written, "to criticise is to judge or to decide [...] We can however, make value judgements that [...] are not only reactive but active – and [...] not only distinctive but useful" (1996: 226).

I was working with white people who believe themselves to be anti-racist; indeed this was why they were working in environments such as Greatmore that sought to be multicultural. Yet I have sought to interrogate this assumption, to strive to understand the role of psychosocial intervention in guiding white people's engagements with black people, and problems inherent in doing so. What I have sought to achieve is a "simultaneous dialogue and critique, to attempt to grasp an alien turn of mind that disrupts the ethnographer's preconceptions, while at the same time critically evaluating the taken-for-granted predispositions of the communities under study" (Ware and Back 2002: 43). While it would be problematic to try and establish a "white on white" methodology (Frankenberg 1993: 23), my presence as a white woman was advantageous in respect to enabling many white informants to be open in their roles and ambitions in this particular context where whiteness, femaleness and therapeutic intervention seemingly collude, and where they saw me as needing convincing of the power of "giving back", enabling me to present a sceptical position while not being deceptive. It is perhaps not surprising that is was exactly this position which enabled me to gain access to black participants, for they were interested by my approach, which focused on the organisation, and what it was doing for black artists/participants, rather than being one of many Westerners who would come to interview black artists about their work, without considering the context within which they were working.

At Greatmore the research that I was doing was long-term, and I began to engage myself with the institution by taking on small responsibilities such as making tea, washing-up – indeed participating in activities that artists were expected to undertake,

rather than taking on full office responsibilities. This enabled me to spend a great deal of time with my main informant at Greatmore, Alex, while also making it clear to the artists that I was a researcher rather than a volunteer. I was nonetheless able to observe the running of Greatmore from the perspective of the administrator-cum-manager of day-to-day affairs and the role of psychosocial intervention in the implementing of decisions. Alex was extremely accommodating, and we developed a close friendship, in which I was able to discuss my sceptical position, and she responded with honesty and willingness to engage with what I was researching. During my research, we were able to provide each other with much emotional support; Alex supported me in my being away from home, and I took on a supportive role for Alex at Greatmore. The one situation that did demand that I become more closely associated with the office was when I office-sat when Alex was on leave. This did have the potential to identify me more closely with the office, but afterwards I was able to distance myself from it, through spending time with the artists.

Undertaking research with artists initially entailed making sure that I was present in neutral areas of Greatmore, such as the kitchen, where I could approach and be approached informally. It was in working with the artists, and particularly black artists, that the necessity of not being associated with the white management was most apparent. Black artists were happy to help me with my research, on the understanding that it would be invaluable to have a research document made about the experience of black artists working in Cape Town. It was necessary to carry out research with artists as I aimed to discern the impact of initiatives that Greatmore imposed onto artists, as well as conceptions of being successful artists. This enabled me to understand areas of compatibility as well as disagreement between the management and artists using Greatmore. A great deal of time was spent observing artists working, particularly in what was known as Studio One, for the artists using this studio were the focus of Greatmore during my time of research, generating much excitement in Cape Town's art community. I sought to consider why this was so, which necessitated considering their behaviour, their artworks and which artwork they considered to be successful, comparing these observations to the aims of psychosocial intervention.

In researching both the management and artists, I used a combination of conversational interviews and participant observation, allowing me to gain a fuller understanding of the use of psychosocial intervention as a means of negotiating interactions and of explaining the intentions of making art. In order to "understand *why* persons act as they do we need to understand the meaning and significance they give to their actions" (Jones 2004: 257, original emphasis), and it is through conversational interviews that this is possible. But it is equally important to be able to use participant observation, as it offered me the opportunity to gather data that would not be possible from interviews alone by the rich experiential context it provides (Becker and Geer 2004: 249). Photographing the studio complex and artworks was an important source of data, on which I drew along with my field diary, on leaving the field.

Similar techniques were called on during the two Thupelo workshops I attended. Indeed, the very boundedness (in time and space) of the workshops offered themselves as a frame for observing dynamics that I sought to observe more generally throughout the time of research. Before the first workshop, which was to be the regional, I discussed with its trustee, Jill, the possibilities of doing research, as these workshops are characterised by being closed to outsiders. We agreed that this would be possible, and the regional would be used as a trial. On the basis of how successfully that experience went I was to be invited as a participant to the second, international workshop to be held four months later, which did become possible. At both workshops I was introduced to the participants during the opening speech given by Jill, as being an observer and a helper, giving me unprecedented access to the workshops. After both workshops I wrote a report, which was considered to be my artwork, thus validating and legitimising my role as a participant *and* an observer at both workshops (see appendix A).

Being accepted by the participants as, quite literally, a participant observer meant that I had access to all aspects of the workshop. The fact that the workshops take place in a shared space meant that participants were constantly under surveillance from each other, making it a self-conscious performance. This lessened the impact or oddity of my role as an observer, enabling me to observe potentially sensitive behaviour such as dynamics of interactions, critical in a multicultural context, as well as being told

participants' reactions to this context. Participant observation also allowed me to observe and document the art-making process and how each participant's work developed in relation to their behaviour and experience of the workshop. Being able to take notes openly was an extremely valuable research source, and was possible in both informal gatherings and more formal dialogues, which are important parts of the workshops; while my role as on-site helper meant that that participants would approach me with a wide range of problems (art materials, food, disagreements and so on) giving me further important information about the experience of being a Thupelo participant.

While my thesis does not claim or attempt to be a comprehensive survey of art institutions in Cape Town, an important component of my research has been to carry out research in other institutions that have connections in some way to Greatmore and Thupelo. This was to understand the impact of psychosocial intervention in a wider context in which Greatmore and Thupelo operate. This was achieved through a combination of participant observation and qualitative interviews with other facilitators of art workshops and classes in Cape Town. I also participated as a student at two art classes, and as a participant at other workshops. Participating in these contexts meant making art, which was a very important component of my research. It not only allowed me to interact with the other students on a more equal footing, but the process of making art also allowed me to experience the significance of "doing" (Warnier 2001), of creating, which is considered to be so important by my informants. Thus, reactions over the art that I made and encouragement to be making art came to be important data in its own right.

Ethical Considerations

Les Back has recently stated that if "social research is to have a future it must hold to the project of listening and speaking to people who live the consequence of the globalised world with respect and humility while maintaining critical judgement" (2004: 213). And it is to combine this respect with offering a critical position that I have sought to realise. As an institutional ethnography, the importance of accountability comes to the fore. Some of my informants were in public roles and it would be problematic to try to conceal their identities; as such their names have not been changed. These are roles that should be publicly accountable (Rainwater and

Pittman 1967: 287). All other names have been changed. I have sought to protect the privacy of all my informants, focusing on their professional roles and what they disclose in their respective roles at the institutions concerned. Thus, while psychosocial intervention takes an invasive role in its treatment of others, I have sought to limit this ethnography to the roles that actors took on when acting in or on behalf of the institutions they were engaged with. This is to limit the "probing" into other people's lives that ethnography is just as capable of doing (Wolcott 1999: 284). I consider it essential to make available my thesis to Greatmore, for it to be used as a resource in thinking reflexively about the organisation. It is also my hope that artists and other interested parties in Cape Town and more widely will read it, as a means of ensuring my own accountability and in striving to make academic work accessible and relevant.

Conclusion

This thesis is not a comprehensive survey of Cape Town's art organisations, but an investigation of Greatmore and Thupelo and related organisations where making art is utilised as a force for making morally and ethically responsible individuals. They can be characterised as English-speaking dominated and liberal, aiming to be inclusive and create opportunities for marginalized artists. The consequence is that opportunities for many black artists in Cape Town come in contact with this therapeutic influence, and psychosocial intervention and its influence in conceiving of creativity, community and selfhood needs to be unpacked.

Chapter 1 will explore and map out my theoretical position, considering literature about the pervasiveness of therapeutics in society, making-art and their relationship to both identity and community. Chapter 2 will consider psychosocial intervention and art-making as they manifest themselves in South Africa and specifically Cape Town as pastoral care initiatives. How these relate to and impact on race, gender, and notions of victimhood as well as selfhood will be considered. Chapter 3 will consider the importance of non-figurative art-making as a means to realise freedom of expression at the early Thupelo workshops, in order to understand the context and means by which the contemporary workshops can privilege psychosocial intervention while still claiming a continuity with the early workshops. Chapter 4 will offer a detailed descriptive analysis of two contemporary workshops, explaining how

psychosocial intervention comes to be the hegemonic means of negotiating interactions and making the workshop meaningful in post-apartheid South Africa. Chapter 5 will be descriptive, providing the reader with an understanding of the particular aims and motivations of Greatmore, in relation to the practical difficulties experienced in implementing them. The final two chapters will focus on the issue of art-making; chapter 6 will consider the motivations and experiences of facilitators of art-classes and workshops, looking at the role psychosocial intervention has as a means of working with black, white and female participants. Chapter 7 will consider the possibilities of realising a "new" multicultural South African community in light of the kind of art-making and sanitized forms of discussion that are encouraged. My conclusion will suggest that psychosocial intervention has come to be a means by which white residents of Cape Town's liberal art community have been able to negotiate multicultural interactions, and that rhetorical declarations for change and transformation, characteristic of psychosocial intervention, are not realised due to an inability to relinquish power.

Chapter 1: Theoretical Context: The Quest for Self-Affirmation

Introduction

As suggested in the title of this thesis, I am concerned with the relationship between the following three phenomena: creativity, community and selfhood. This chapter is concerned with each notion, and their relationship to one another. Charles Taylor writes about the self and its awareness in relation to others: "The very way we walk, move, gesture, speak, is shaped from the earliest moments by our awareness that we appear before others, that we stand in public space, and that this space is potentially one of respect or contempt or pride or shame" (1989: 15). The first part of this chapter will consider a selection of authors who have considered the impact of therapeutic culture in late modernity (after Giddens 1991), taking a critical engagement with popular therapeutic practices.

The following section will consider how the act of making art comes to be considered as a means to realising the self, and its consequent appeal to educators and therapists. Art educators and therapists have drawn on the liberatory and radical language of Paulo Freire (2004) and (the less radical) Herbert Read (1958) in attempts to bring about self-realisation. However, the intentions of these writers have been manipulated to serve particular needs that privilege conformity rather than intellectual and critical reflection. Later sections of this chapter will consider the particularities of gender and race in relation to notions of empathy and desire to help others, before finally considering notions of community, and the investments that are placed on community as a virtuous location.

The Therapeutic Paradigm

In thinking about the encompassing role of therapeutics in Cape Town, the following authors offer a means of conceptualising the issues at stake. First is Anthony Giddens, who has written of the impact of modernity[1] – which has become world-historical in the twentieth-century – on self-identity. High modernity, where these characteristics become more prevalent, entails new forms of mediated experience, in which self-identity becomes a reflexively organised endeavour (1991: 5). This results

[1] Giddens defines modernity as consisting of three interconnected elements: the separation of time and space; disembedding mechanisms, pertaining to capital; and thirdly, institutional reflexivity, a consequence of the undermining of the certainty of knowledge in modernity (1991: 20 – 21).

from daily life being reconstituted in terms of the dialectical interplay of the local and the global and the impact this has on individuals being required to negotiate lifestyle choices among a diversity of options (ibid.). Giddens sees doubt becoming a pervasive feature of modern critical reason, which permeates into everyday life as well as philosophical consciousness, forming a "general existential dimension of the contemporary world" (ibid.: 3). Existential questions such as "What to do? How to act? Who to be? [...] are ones which, on some level or another, all of us have to answer, either discursively or through day-to-day social behaviour" (ibid.: 70). It is here that therapy, including self-therapy, comes to be sought as a means of empowering oneself, through "reflexive monitoring" (ibid.: 107). It will become apparent that in post-apartheid South Africa, many existential questions have come to the fore as white people grapple with the changes they are experiencing (Steyn 2001a: 92). The destructive nature of this expanding therapeutic enterprise on social relationships and intellectual thought is however, widely contested.

One of the pioneers who identified the development of a therapeutic culture was Philip Rieff, an American sociologist who wrote *The Triumph of the Therapeutic: Uses of Faith After Freud* in 1966. In this book Rieff examines the rise of "psychological man" and the impact that this will have on a new Western culture and form of pastoral guidance. Rieff considers both the East and the West to be committed, culturally as well as economically, to the gospel of self-fulfilment. By identifying this new culture as needing therapeutic institutions, Rieff advises Churchmen to become therapists, "administering a therapeutic institution – under the justification that Jesus was the first therapeutic" (1966: 251). Rieff declares that the "therapeutic will be a man of leisure, released by technology from the regimental discipline of work so as to secure his sense of well-being in highly refined alloplastic ways" (ibid.: 236). This will be very pertinent for considering the role of affluent residents of Cape Town and their adherence to therapeutics. The inability to find fulfilment from work is also observed by Christopher Lasch as a major factor in the development of the therapeutic culture, or as he has famously coined it, "the culture of narcissism" (1979). Writing of American progressivism, Lasch considers that it has rejected the nineteenth-century liberal concept of man, "which assumed the primacy of rational self-interest, and installed in its place a therapeutic conception which acknowledges irrational drives and seeks to divert them into socially constructive

channels" (1979: 224). This presents itself as a rejection of the stereotype of economic man and has attempted to bring the "whole man" under social control (ibid.). Summing up this phenomenon, Lasch writes:

> Instead of regulating the conditions of work alone, it now regulates private life as well, organizing leisure time on scientific principles of social and personal hygiene. It has exposed the innermost secrets of the psyche to medical scrutiny and has thus encouraged habits of anxious self-scrutiny, superficially reminiscent of religious introspection but rooted in anxiety rather than a guilty conscience – in a narcissistic rather than a compulsive or hysterical type of personality. (1979: 224)

Lasch considers how narcissism "appears to embody – in the guise of 'personal growth' and 'awareness' – the highest attainment of spiritual enlightenment" (1979: 235), where salvation comes to be conceived as "mental health" (ibid.: 13). Elsewhere Lasch has evoked Jurgen Habermas's phrase, the "colonization of the life-world" (in Lasch 1997: 146), to refer to the way in which nothing was to be exempt from pedagogical or therapeutic mediation (ibid.). Lasch alerts us to the impact that this culture has on politics, which "degenerates into a struggle not for social change but for self-realisation" (1979: 28). Lasch cites ex-radicals who have replaced political slogans with current therapeutic slogans, miring self-awareness is mired in liberationist clichés (ibid.: 15). Lasch writes of the means by which the social origins of suffering are obscured, resulting in "what is painfully but falsely experienced as purely personal and private" (ibid.: 30). This shift from social problems to personal ones, from real issues to false issues (ibid.) is particularly pertinent for considering transferences of conceptions of pain and suffering in South Africa. In a similar vein, Eva Moskowitz has written of how America's obsession with the psyche and quick fix solutions offered by the therapeutic gospel has "crowded out other ways of thinking. It has blinded us to underlying economic and political realities" (2001: 7). Moskowitz also discusses the means by which the therapeutic gospel robs us of the ability to make serious moral judgements; "In this religion there is no right or wrong" (ibid.).

Writing over thirty years since Philip Rieff identified and articulated this growing phenomenon, James Nolan has examined the extent to which the therapeutic ethos has penetrated the modern American state (1998: 3), from prison services to politics.

Nolan sees much compatibility between the dominance of utilitarian capitalism and the therapeutic cultural impulse, for both "embody the perceived limitlessness with which those in the modern world approach life. The utilitarian perspective tells us that the natural world has no limits, that we can control it and re-create it. The therapeutic ethos tells us that our psyches have no limits, [...] that we can re-create ourselves" (1998: 20). Nolan distinguishes the therapeutic ethos from the discipline of psychology and specific psychological or counselling enterprises. Instead it is a more widespread, cultural ethos or system of moral understanding (ibid.: 2). The self becomes the ultimate point of reference, to be freed from inhibitions and restraints; the self is to be esteemed, actualised, affirmed and unfettered (ibid.: 3). For by "boiling all problems down to feelings of inferiority, the therapeutic gospel shows itself utterly incapable of leading us out of today's devastating social, economic, and political quagmires" (ibid.).

Writing of the situation in the UK, Frank Furedi has observed how opportunities to "colonise private life" (2004a.: 99) have become possible through the pathologisation of human behaviour (ibid.: 101). The institutionalisation of the therapeutic ethos has come to constitute a regime of social control (2004a.: 199), where the "new therapeutic social contract is underwritten by the paternalistic assumption that the vulnerable subject needs the management and 'support' of officialdom and the state" (ibid.: 196). Moreover, therapeutics creates a demand for itself by continually compromising the informal networks of support that people rely on to negotiate the challenges of daily life (ibid.: 103). Furedi has also considered how people's need for self-esteem is linked to group identity, even though concern with the self tends to individualise problems (ibid.: 148), believing that this is a consequence of the current ascendancy of feelings and emotional well-being in the culture as a whole (ibid.). Thus, in "a culture where nations heal, communities are traumatised and minorities suffer from a low level of self-esteem, important aspects of collective identities are understood through the prism of emotion" (ibid.). This observation has much saliency for thinking about the appeal to the privileging of emotions as a means to create belonging in Cape Town.

The above authors have focused on the phenomenon in North America and Western Europe. Vanessa Pupavac, a former lawyer, has written a series of articles that

interrogate the therapeutic paradigm in its international reach, particularly its imposition and impact in post-Yugoslav states (2000, 2001, 2002a, 200b and 2003). Lasch, Nolan, Moskowitz and Furedi have articulated various means by which citizens came to be redefined as victims, while Pupavac has explained how this has "assumed universal vulnerability" (2001: 363), where whole populations might be labelled as traumatised (ibid.: 362). This context, in which a whole population was considered to be suffering from mass-trauma, was also subjected to an externally identified need to (re)build identities at both an individual and a national level, offering fertile terrain for psychosocial intervention, which arrived in the form of UNICEF and other aid agencies (2003: 159). Pupavac has coined the term "therapeutic governance" (2001: 358) to describe the means by which psychosocial intervention, comes to not only legitimate intervention in people's lives on a global scale, but also has a coercive disciplinary role (ibid.: 361) Self-esteem comes to be regarded as a prerequisite for being a good citizen (ibid.), and national emotional literacy programmes are proposed as a means to promote good citizenship (ibid. and Giddens 1994).

The writers discussed here have highlighted the significance of the therapeutic approach for the relationship between citizens and the state, emphasising "a new therapeutic mode of social control" (Lasch 1979: 218). But this literature has had limited impact on the theology that accepts therapeutic intervention as benevolent. Thus, while the efficacy of psychosocial intervention has been treated as self-evident, "examination of its functionalism is long overdue" (Pupavac 2003: 168). Pupavac has concluded that people who fail to internalise the psychosocial model and its contradictory injunctions, "have spared themselves the full impact of the external pathologization of their condition" (2002b: 507). With the self being recognised as vulnerable, and rendered into a position that is "in recovery (never recovered)" (2003: 167), a "prerequisite for the regeneration of war-affected societies is the rejection of their pathologization" (ibid.). Furedi considers that the promotion of emotional intelligence is symptomatic of a climate of intellectual pessimism (2004a: 160), and another paper has highlighted the anti-research culture in counselling, where individual knowledge, learning and personal experience are rated more highly than academic knowledge (Williams and Irving 1999: 369). Similarly, the "anti-trauma movement" (Argenti-Pillen 2003: 205) has argued that those serious about the issues

of torture and atrocity need to address them within a rigorous human rights framework, not merely confined to comfortable humanitarian responses which see survivors as victims needing individual medical or psychological help (Summerfield, quoted in ibid.).[2]

However, a number of academics have considered that the rise of the therapeutic gospel enables fulfilment of human potential. Nikolas Rose considers that "self-inspection, self-problematization, self-monitoring, and confession" form a "genealogy of [...] freedom" (1989: 11) in the twentieth century. He describes "the emergence of new conceptions and techniques of the self in the recent period: the desiring, relating, actualising self [that] is an invention of the second half of the twentieth century" (ibid.: xii). While explicitly stating that our selves have come to be "defined and constructed and governed in psychological terms" (ibid.: xiii), Rose considers this to be liberating. This is because techniques of the self include "the ways we are enabled, by means of the languages, criteria, and techniques offered to us, to act upon our bodies, souls, thoughts, and conduct in order to achieve happiness, wisdom, health, and fulfilment" (ibid.: 10). Rose writes of the "liberating theologies of self assertion" (ibid.: 237) and the psychotherapeutic "procedures for making the self thinkable and knowable" (ibid.: 248). Rose believes that the project of freedom defines the modern self, and is realisable through the application of expertise, a view shared by Tanya Lurhmann who considers psychodynamics to teach a great deal about mastery and faith in human possibility (2001: 291).

Luhrmann has written an engaging ethnography of her research with psychiatrists in various institutions and practices in the USA during the 1990s. She found that psychiatrists have inherited the Cartesian dualism "that is so marked a feature of our moral and spiritual landscape" (2001: 6). Sometimes they would treat mental illness as "written on the body" (ibid.) through biomedical psychiatry or psycho-pharmacology, while at other times, psychiatrists would talk about distress as "something much more complicated, something that involves the kind of person you are: your intentions, your loves and hates, your messy, complicated past" (ibid.). This

[2] Elsewhere, Summerfield notes that on his release from prison in 1990, Nelson Mandela was amazed by the number of questions directed to his private feelings, questions that no one would have thought of posing when he was first incarcerated (1999: 1451, Mandela 1994: 680).

second, psychodynamic conception is associated with psychoanalysis and psychoanalytic psychotherapy; it understands mental illness to be "in your mind and in your emotional reactions to other people. It is 'you'" (ibid.). This is to understand the self as complex, however there is currently an "intolerance of complexity" (Furedi 2004a: 194) in Western societies. Luhrmann considers the biomedical model as simplifying distress, and is concerned by the growing privileging of the biomedical model in psychiatric practice, and the impact that this can have on a patient's "essential who-ness" (2001: 282), for the disease is considered something that is to be removed rather than recognised as part of the self. By considering psychiatric problems as only medical, "we deprive people of their sense of mastery over themselves, of full personhood in our world, of their ability to see themselves as thinking and feeling, just differently from other people" (ibid.: 285).

Luhrmann explains the backlash against psychoanalysis (and the privileging of the vulgarised biomedical model) as anger against Freud; "a cry of moral outrage that became possible only after Prozac and its cousins created an alternative way of conceiving of emotional pain and acting as a moral agent with respect to it" (Luhrmann 2002: 289). Luhrmann argues that what is of value in the approach to human suffering that emerged from Freud, is that "psychoanalysis teaches humility in the face of human pain", and ensures a "culture of responsibility" (ibid.). However, such a culture has been diversely interpreted; the humility that Luhrmann talks of and the importance of "being responsible for oneself, to be a fully moral person" (ibid.: 291) is the same language that is considered by many to constitute a "passive sense of self" (Furedi 2004a: 204). Indeed, the very notion of being responsible has been defined in terms of how in touch with your emotions you are; for to be responsible is to be emotionally literate, to embrace emotions.

There is one further characteristic of the therapeutic ethos that is pertinent to the argument to be made in this thesis, which concerns the particular relationship between women and therapeutic intervention. In a series of essays, edited posthumously by his daughter,[3] Christopher Lasch asserts the compatibility of women's rights, economic changes and the turn to professional "experts". Drawing on Michel Foucault's work,

[3] Elisabeth Lasch-Quinn will be considered in detail below for her own work concerning race sensitivity in the USA.

Lasch observes that nineteenth-century philanthropists created a more effective and pervasive system of social control based on systematic observation and surveillance (1997: 171). The nineteenth-century domestic ideal was based on a middle-class ideal of marriage based on mutual respect, but which, in fact helped foster a new paternalism (Lasch-Quinn 1997: xviii). Many women embraced the cult of domesticity as an assertion of their authority and in the process they often treated doctors and others dispensing advice on domestic matters as allies. Lasch-Quinn concludes that it is ironic that this receptiveness to the "ministrations of so-called experts paved the way for the hegemony of professionals and the therapeutic mentality and for the loss of women's own authority" (ibid.). Suffragists adherence to "progressives' boundless faith in disinterested scientific expertise and reformers drive to control sexuality can be understood as part of a larger effort to subject all human activity to scientific observation and control" (Lasch-Quinn 1997: xxiv). The aims and interventions of suffragists and abolitionists will be considered in more detail below, but what is significant for now is how the rise of women as moral leaders of the family led to interventions into private life on humanitarian grounds.

The compatibility of women's alleged virtues with psychosocial intervention will be discussed below, but we should note that its reach is considered to be universal. Advocates of the trauma-paradigm (Argenti-Pillen 2003: 205) have similarly adopted a universalist approach to the experience of trauma (Bracken, Giller and Summerfield 1995: 1075), in which risk becomes a meaningless generality. Pupavac conceives of psychosocial intervention as a double bind in which the population is caught: "a primary injunction disqualifies people psychologically and politically from determining their affairs and requires them to adopt the psychosocial model. A second injunction instructs them to develop independent psychologically functional personalities that take control of their environment. Meanwhile for all the injunctions about participation and taking ownership, a tertiary structural barrier denies them substantive control or escape from pathological ethnic categories" (2002b: 506 – 7). The ultimate paradox that lies at the heart of this thesis is the notion that to be empowered is to be free, yet the slogans of empowerment are entrenched within a culture of fear that curtails the realisation of empowerment, and is characterised by a passive sense of self, while declarations are made pertaining to self-empowerment and

self-transformation. The following section will consider this paradox or double-bind in relation to the particular aims of art education and art therapy.

Learning Through Art: Holistic Self Development

Throughout this thesis, creativity will be articulated as a means to express the truth about oneself. Thus, I am interested in the techniques, technologies and practices (Marshall 1996: 115) of self-making as well as communal-making, for both are considered to be materialised through creative production. The power of creativity to act as a facilitator in the edification and betterment of people and in the realisation of selfhood is apparent in literature concerning progressive education and art therapy that conform to the therapeutic paradigm that has been outlined in the above section.

Edith Kramer sums up her definition of art therapy by quoting Susan Langer: "The primary function of art is to objectify experience so that we can contemplate and understand it" (Kramer 2000: 18). This is the premise upon which both art therapy and progressive education[4] advocate the importance of art-making. Both hold that art-making is important not merely for developing skills in art technique but for the holistic impact that it is considered to effect upon the maker, developing healthy individuals and enabling them to contribute as members of a community. As such, I am primarily interested in art-making in group settings, whether this be in a class or group therapy session, for the environment in which I was working in Cape Town was concerned primarily with art-making in group settings. In such environments, individual healing and development are considered to be possible through being in a group; it is this shared context that enables certain realisations about the self and others to occur. This results in a perceived conflation of education, art-making and healing as well as notions of dis-ease. As such, this is art-making that has distinct moral purposes beyond simply being about expression, lending itself well to the endeavours of psychosocial intervention.

The self is sometimes described as a spirit, and according to James Hall "spirituality is seen as fundamental to the human condition, to do with the universal search for individual identity, the search for meaning and purpose in life, the values by which to

[4] The progressive movement in education places the child at the centre of education, and has its origins in art education according to James Hall (2004: 156).

live and the development of fundamental human characteristics" (Hall 2004: 144). Many aspects of art education such as creativity, imagination, making and appreciation are spiritual in nature or contain elements of spirituality (ibid.). What is being addressed here is the ability of art education to develop uniqueness in people, and it is this uniqueness, residing in the "inner life" (ibid.) of a person that is to be communicated to others. Art is conceived as a form of communication, a social enterprise, where expression is not simply an outpouring for its own sake (Read 1958: 166). But the ability to communicate stems from an individual who has processed or is in the act of processing certain experiences or feelings that are channelled through art-making. It is the expression of thought and feeling in communicable form, mental experience that might otherwise remain partially or wholly unconscious (Hickman 2004: 2). This view considers art-making to enable the self to be accessible and knowable not only to oneself, but significantly, also to others. That this purpose is promoted through art education suggests that there is a duty to "know" others intimately. Hall explains that art education is also a form of emotional learning, where gaining self knowledge is possible through art-making that is self-directed, and which comes to be a act of disclosure (Hall 2004: 154). This act of becoming fully human, or of "the realising of human potential" (Hall 2004: 159) justifies art-making on the grounds that it is a means to an end, not merely an end in itself (Hickman 2004: 10).

Perhaps the most recognisable advocates of the benefits of art-making for society was Herbert Read, and the West has tended to locate the beginnings of progressive ideas of art education to Read's *Education Through Art* first published in 1943. Read was an educational philosopher, who considered that authentic creativity was an inherent human necessity.[5] At an early age he had been very influenced by avant-garde painting and turned for explanations to writers such as Nietzsche and Marx, and in so doing discovered links between the aesthetic and the socio-political, which confirmed for Read the "authority of the aesthetic imperative" (Thistlewood 1993: 148). Read considered the avant-garde to be the "sensitive registers of an evolving intelligence comprising the whole social body" (ibid.); new aesthetic perceptions that the avant-

[5] It is also worth noting that Read had fought in World War I, and was wounded/traumatised. His later work on art would seem to make art have a redemptive role (personal communication with Christopher Pinney, 31st August 2004).

garde might develop would be a vital aspect of a constant, necessary process of social renewal and reinvigoration (ibid.). While advising the British Council on a children's art exhibition, Read came across an image made by a young child, which Read identified as being the image of a Mandala, an ancient symbol of psychic unity (ibid.: 152). Thistlewood explains that for Read, this was phenomenal evidence of archetypal imagery that had been hypothesised by Carl Jung (ibid.). Read felt that the avant-garde's purpose was to guide the collective unconscious into normal patterns of behaviour, but that this "remedial function" would not be necessary if "the self-same imagery, evident in child art generally could be protracted into adulthood for everyone" (ibid.: 153). Read was interested in considering social psychology, particularly the idea of an impulse-driven emergence of imagery from the subconscious into conscious attention by the reflex coordination of mental, physical and perceptual faculties. "Conjoining Freudian and Jungian philosophy, he wrote of the 'calling-up' of images – images with primordial significance – hidden from the depths of the mind" (ibid.: 154).

In his seminal book Read identifies Plato as being the first to acknowledge this purpose of art: "Plato proposed like modern psychologists that all grace of movement and harmony of living – the moral disposition of the soul itself – are determined by aesthetic feeling; by the recognition of rhythm and harmony. The same qualities, he said, enter largely into painting and all similar workmanship" (1958: 62). This harmony is all pervading and is the very principle of coherence in the universe; thus Plato reasoned that it should be the basis of education (ibid: 64). Read aimed to revitalise Plato's theory, considering it in the context of the emerging discipline of psychology:

> One of the most certain lessons of modern psychology and of recent historical experiences, is that education must be a process of individuation, but also of integration, which is the reconciliation of individual uniqueness with social unity. (Read quoted in Dalley 1990: 164)

Read drew on developments in psychology to advocate learning methods based on visual and tactile factors such as activities involving the plastic arts, which "by evoking, defining and co-ordinating the mental imagery of the child, stimulate that creative use of imagery, the imagination" (1958: 66). Read was adamant about the

importance of development of the individual, declaring "the child's modes of plastic expression are the key to the child's particular disposition" (ibid.: 73). Concerning the development of abstract thought at eleven years of age, Read suggests that it is perhaps even more important that visual and plastic (imagist) modes of expression should be encouraged and practiced, thus "preserving not only the function of imagination, but even more necessarily the essential unity of perception: not only the continuously vitalising interchange of mind and the concrete events of the natural world, but also the continuous nourishment of the individual psyche from the deeper levels of the mind" (1958: 168). Read advocated that "play is a form of art" (1958: 110), that "free or spontaneous expression is the unconstrained exteriorisation of the mental activities of thinking, feeling, sensation and intuition" (1958: 112). This "life-expression" (Ross 1993: 137) needs to be encouraged in all humans, but particularly once people have reached school age where intuitive expression is considered to be suppressed in favour of producing realism (see Gardner 1990).

Howard Gardner, an educational psychologist and social theorist has been very influenced by Read. Gardner explains that central to the visual arts "is the capacity to deal with visual-spatial kinds of symbols – to think in terms of forms, what they represent, what feelings they can express, how they can be composed and combined, and what multiple forms of significance they embody" (Gardner 1990: 42). Quoting Read, he continues that although these issues can be confronted via verbal and logical forms of symbolization, they should not be taken as a substitute for "thinking" and "problem solving" in the medium itself (in Gardner ibid.). Gardner defines five types of knowledge – intuitive knowledge, first-order symbolic knowledge, notational knowledge, formal knowledge and skilled knowledge. While the first four develop in succession, the fifth form of knowledge fits less readily into this developmental scheme. It has its roots in "the early sensori-motor or intuitive knowledge of the child [...but is also a part of] exposure to notational and bodies of codified knowledge, such as an electrician" (1990: 28). Gardner later identified a theory of multiple intelligences that further challenged the standard hierarchy of mind over body and thought over physical labour. These were: intelligence, logical/mathematical intelligence, musical, spatial, personal and bodily-kinaesthetic intelligence. Gardner defined this final form of intelligence as "the ability to use one's body in highly

differentiated and skilled ways, for expression as well as goal directed purposes" (in Metcalf 1997: 75).

Although Gardner's explanation for art-making makes clear that there is no need to perceive a divide between scholastic/intellectual knowledge and creative knowledge, such a division remains intact for many people, who simultaneously maintain that creativity is "special". There is much reluctance to analyse why this is so: "The danger is that in trying to intellectualise this kind of intelligence we run the risk of destroying its essential character, which is tacit and intuitive and acquired through hands-on experience" (Mason 2004: 141). Concern with intellectualising creativity is also shared by many in the art movement I was researching and which will become apparent through the course of this thesis. It is also shared by progressive educationalists, who have been concerned to develop education, and art education in particular, as a means to enhance expression, originality and cultivation of individuality (Gardner 1990: 51). This has seen the move away from representational modes of depiction to a preference for simply providing materials and encouragement, which is seen as "a vehicle for self-expression, imagination, creativity and knowledge of one's affective life" (Gardner 1990: 35). But this is presented as being divorced from scholastic knowledge by authors who draw on Read's legacy and Gardner (see Mason and Houghton 2002), despite this being at odds with Read's own concern that "expression in art meant having certain basic understandings and practical skills as well as a finely tuned sensibility" (Ross 1993: 137). This separation is further complicated by the notion of free expression used in art therapy.

Susan Sontag reminds us that for Aristotle art had a use as a form of therapy, that art is "medicinally useful in that it arouses and purges dangerous emotions" (Sontag 2001: 4). Art therapy has been defined as involving "the use of different art media through which a patient can express and work through the issues and concerns that have brought him or her into therapy" (Case and Dalley 1992: 1). Art therapy is understood to introduce into the therapeutic process, experiential interactions with materials from which the client creates pictures and objects, and as distinct from verbal therapies, for in art therapy words are a companion in the therapeutic journey rather than the primary vehicle for self-exploration (Fabre-Lewin 1997: 115). Another definition of art therapy explains that it is a way of using art materials for

personal self-expression: "It can be fun and also serious. It can provide a space for people to play and be creative in their own way. [...] Art therapy is not about someone else reading your mind (that is for everyone to do for themselves) or about being 'good at art' – anyone can do it" (Liebmann 1997: 199). Emphasising the egalitarian nature of art-making is crucial, for art and art-making are believed to be an innate need in humans that can bring about well-being.

Much of the literature on art therapy in the West is concerned specifically with working with allegedly vulnerable or disadvantaged groups, such as children (Case and Dalley 1990), women (Hogan 1997 and 2003) and black and Asian people (Campbell and Gaga 1997, Roy 1997). There is simultaneously some recognition amongst art therapists that the profession is dominated by women who are both white and middle-class (Hogan 1997 and 2003). Savneet Talwar is aware that these newly trained practitioners begin work with "low income populations: primarily ethnic minorities and women" (2003: 185), which can have particular consequences. Marion Liebmann grapples with her position and role as a white woman and therapist working with black clients and therapists, voicing concern over the necessity of being "aware of the power differences" (1999: 270). But she also expresses the "frustrations" felt by patients and staff, over politically correct phrases, which "sometimes led to a genuine lack of communication and could prevent honesty (for instance, when criticism was due) – it no longer seemed possible to treat people as people" (ibid.). However, Liebmann concludes optimistically: "working in multi-cultural team provides opportunities for learning together, teams need to make space for this learning, in particular a non-judgemental and non-threatening atmosphere, where people are not afraid of making mistakes – it is often from mistakes that real learning comes" (ibid.: 271).

In another article Liebmann considers the specific benefits that women gain from attending art therapy workshops. Writing about a particular women's group that ran a group art therapy course in a deprived inner-city area of Bristol (UK), Liebmann describes the impact that gender had in the group comparing it to male therapy groups she had worked with. While being aware that this is a generalisation, Liebmann nevertheless saw "cultural patterns and social arrangements influence the concerns of women and men in art therapy groups" (1997: 212). She explains that women tended

to worry more about others such as their families, and had difficulty claiming their own space, while men seemed to worry about themselves, reflecting on the harsh treatment they have received from others. Women were concerned about using too much paint; sometimes trying to scrape leftover paint back into the bottles, while men often needed help getting in touch with their feelings, the women knew what feelings they had, but needed permission to express them (ibid.). The main themes in their work and discussions were children, families and relationships, and led to a "consciousness-raising aspect of the project [through art therapy being a] vehicle for expression – of being a women's group in a deprived area" (ibid.). Participants began to "recognise the social factors influencing their condition – both mental and physical", which in turn brought the group together, friendship and realisation of their inner resourcefulness, "lifting the burden of feeling isolated and personally responsible for all the bad things that had happened to them" (ibid.: 214). These two articles by Liebmann have been greatly influenced by the legacy of Paulo Freire. Paulo Freire, the Brazilian author of *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* [1970] (2004), has also been a huge influence on late twentieth-century Western progressive education philosophy.

Freire articulated a theory of literary education for illiterate peasants in Brazil, which would bring about their political awareness and foster their participation in a larger movement towards liberation from colonisation. He explained that under oppression people are "object", passive, and once liberated they become "subject" and interact with their world. It is worth considering the similarities between Read and Freire: Read called for "a practical pedagogy based on reciprocity" (Ross 1993: 135), that the "adult's relations to the child must always be that of collaborator, never that of master" (ibid.). Freire wrote that "teachers and students [...] are both Subjects, not only in the task of unveiling that reality, and thereby coming to know it critically, but in the task of re-creating that knowledge" (2004: 69). This enables committed involvement from the oppressed and/or students in their own education, which in its true form is equal to freedom (see bell hooks 2003). Freire described the role of the educator "for liberation", being not to teach or lead an individual so much as to foster an awareness of his or her *own* situation, which Freire called *conscientizacao*, or conscientization. This is translated as "learning to perceive social, political, and economic contradictions, and to take action against the oppressive elements of reality"

(translator's note, 2004: 35). But such notions of reciprocity and liberation have been hijacked by therapeutic intervention without any recognition of the fundamental antithetical positions of oppressors and oppressed. Freire holds that the oppressors "preach an impossible harmony between themselves (who dehumanise) and the oppressed (who are dehumanised)" (2004: 145). Moreover, the dominators try to present themselves as saviours of the people they dehumanise and destroy, but this "messianism cannot conceal their true intention: to save themselves" (ibid.). To justify their intervention in others lives, proponents of progressive education and therapeutic intervention have appropriated this very language.

Freire's legacy has also been used as a means to articulate the objectives of therapy, particularly in multi-cultural settings. His work has been described as dealing with the nature of "real" learning, which has the "power to transform" and thus be a means to liberation (Weston 1999: 187). Such "authentic liberation" is a process of humanisation that involves the notion of praxis, united with theory. Sally Weston draws on Freire's definition of praxis as being "the action and reflection of human beings on their world in order to transform it" (ibid. and see Freire 2004: 126). Humanisation, or the "emergence of consciousness, and the search for identity through unveiling the forces of oppression" (Lasch-Quinn 2001: 225), is compatible with, and reflects the aims of empowering therapy. This process or even "vocation of becoming more fully human" (Freire 2004: 44) compliments the aim of therapy, just as the role of therapist is to encourage self-awareness and discovery, and not to impose opinions onto the client. The quest to be fully human is considered to be the just destiny of all people. Weston goes on to suggest that this description of action and reflection applies to the process people engage with in art therapy:

> [...] mental illness and distress [...] can be felt as an imprisonment within the self, in which people are cut off from creative and powerful interaction with the world, or even from believing that they have any power in their own lives. Finding a means of expression in an art therapy group can be a vital first step towards empowerment, 'becoming subject' or developing a sense of self able to fully interact with and have influence in the world. (Western 1999: 187)

In another article concerning art therapy and its potential as a source of self-empowerment for Third World women, Savneet Talwar references Freire, drawing on his decolonisation process, involving an "awakening of consciousness" (2003: 189).

Talwar explains that this process, according to Freire emphasises the importance of the therapeutic relationship that functions as a dialogue to facilitate the process of critical thinking. This process of psychotherapeutic decolonisation begins with the recognition of the social context of colonisation and oppression and the acknowledgement of colonised mentalities. Talwar believes that the dichotomous thinking that stems from colonisation can actually help reaffirm the multiple identities of women of colour by developing a more integrated and less fragmented sense of identity. Through the process of decolonisation, the client in art therapy is more able to identify the difference between external and internal colonisation and thus achieve autonomous dignity (2003: 190). The consequence being that when women of colour are empowered within their personal spheres, they can make informed decisions, and thus transform the colonised condition (ibid.). Turning to the specific role of art in this therapeutic process, Talwar explains that the art process has the capacity to hold a polytheistic view of the clients' inner world, while the changing images reflect both internal and external realities of the client and the art therapeutic process. It is in such a context that an oppressed person can "reclaim her voice and sense of self" (2003: 191).

Freire has been considered to be an attractive revolutionary in the contexts of "movements for participatory democracy, the struggle for equal rights of blacks and other minorities, students, women, gays, and workers, and other challenges to received authority" (Lasch-Quinn 2001: 222). Elisabeth Lasch-Quinn explains that Freire's pedagogy has been so popular because it is easily grasped and appears to address the question of how the promise of egalitarianism would be fulfilled; and perhaps more importantly, his theory described a role for those who were sympathetic with the revolutionary struggle of the oppressed (ibid.). What Freire is seemingly offering sympathisers of the oppressed is the role of educator, the educator as empower-er, which also gets transferred to the role of therapist. According to bell hooks, liberatory teachers have gone through a process of transforming their own lives fundamentally, from "the core of their being" (2003: xv), so as to be able to conceive of "the classroom as a place that is life-sustaining and mind-expanding, a place of liberating mutuality where teacher and student work together in partnership" (ibid.). But this process of transformation gets manipulated within the language of the therapeutic paradigm, where personal transformation is considered to be equal to

revolutionary transformation and where there is a reluctance to give up power inequalities. This goes hand in hand with an anti-intellectual position, for many white educators who deal with "at risk" populations wilfully adopt a benevolent methodology but refuse to engage the theories that inform it (Macedo 1998: xxxi). "He who knows that he is in a bad ideological or ethical position generally boasts of being a man of *action*, one who draws his lessons from experience" (Memmi, quoted in ibid. my emphasis). Donaldo Macedo contends that by not theorising their practice, the liberal educators (and therapists) shield themselves from the self-critical reflection that could interrogate, among other things, how the maintenance of their privilege invariably makes them complicit with the dominant ideology that creates the need for them to engage in various forms of practice in oppressed communities (ibid.).

In an article that considers how art therapy can be a medium for cultural and political change for women as well as for personal transformation, Miche Fabre-Lewin considers the physicality of image-making and how this can "engage the client profoundly in her path towards self-empowerment" (1997: 116). Fabre-Lewin asks "what is it about the creation of visual images as distinct from verbal language which enables women as clients to regain a sense of their own power and reclaim possession of their bodies?" (ibid. 119). Her answer lies in the rediscovering of physical sensations, intuitive impulses and the physical processes that are central to art therapy. As it is through our bodies that we experience the world, Fabre-Lewin considers that "our body's interrelationship with the world is essential to becoming conscious, [...] we cannot think ourselves into liberation alone, we need to enact our way to freedom through the body" (ibid. 119). Fabre-Lewin draws on Merleau-Ponty's understanding that our cognition of the world is more than purely mental or intellectual; "belonging to the sentient world requires making sense of existence phenomenologically by involving the whole of our physical body with its sensory, motor and affective capabilities" (ibid.). This is the self as embodied; art-making enables the physical and corporeal expression of emotions, emotions that are contained within a physical self. When carried out in a safe environment, art therapy is able to be "an embodied cathartic discharge of emotion" (ibid. 121). Moreover, the artistic process and product act as "a metaphor of mediation between our inner lives and the outer world", as Fabre-Lewin explains: "this mirroring of our psycho-physical existence through the

arts process involves the body in an interactive relationship with other concrete, material objects in the world" (ibid.). And as well as being a space for action and enactment, "the art-making process offers time for reverie, reflection and musing" (ibid. 122). This call to transform oneself through engaging with and moulding material objects, is to achieve a stable self-identity. This transformed self is to be "powerful, visible and active" (ibid.: 123); it is to be reborn empowered by self-knowledge gained through the art-making process. Here, empowerment is realised through the experience of being-in-the-world, and of producing something through using one's physicality, just as the experience of "being-in-the-world cannot be divorced from the material aspect of our bodies" (Morton and Macintyre 1995: 11).

A belief in the "transformative power of the arts at both a personal and a community level" (Berman quoted in Allara, unpublished paper: 36), necessarily assumes an interest in the produc*ing* of art. The act of producing or making is held to facilitate a realising of the self through a sensuous engagement with material culture, which "reaches the subject in its depth" (Warnier 2001: 13). Furthermore, this is sensori-motor experience, which, for Jean-Paul Warnier extends Foucault's "technologies of the self" to "technologies of the body", accounting for the materiality of subjectivity (ibid.: 10). The embodied experience of producing material products is the result of sensori-affective-motricity, which is itself a process of internalisation, and for expression (through images) and communication (through words) to take place there must first be a process of internalisation through personal experience (ibid: 16). These processes are components of symbolization, which is a means by which subjects "introduce into [their] psychic envelope [their] experiences of the outside world (ibid: 14), before expressing and communicating them to others. This "bodily-kinaesthetic knowledge [...] acquired through sensory knowledge and motor actions" (Gardner, quoted in Mason and Houghton 2002: 60) needs to be communicable and knowable to others. Creative production in workshops, classes and therapy groups is, after all, a communal activity, demanding that what is created be socially validated and coded (Warnier 2001: 5). This understanding of creativity allegedly fulfils three different but interrelated desires: firstly, a basic human need for sensory experience (Mason and Houghton 2002: 54), secondly, "mastery of oneself" (Foucault quoted in Warnier 2001: 10), and finally the means to communicate this mastery to others.

Educators, psychologists and art therapists, consider the sensuous activity of making to enable changes in individuals, which is possible through "tacit knowing" (Polanyi quoted in Schon 1991: 52 and see Hickman 2004). This practical knowledge acquired by doing is distinct from direct learning which is academic (Sternberg and Caruso 1985). Malcolm Metcalf distinguishes the craftworld from the artworld, as only the craftworld accepts the meanings of felt experience, for he sees the artworld remaining dedicated to meanings embedded in texts and discourses (1997: 80). Metcalf describes the potent response exhibited by a craft student as "an intuitive recognition that the bodily-kinaesthetic intelligence has finally found an outlet" (ibid.: 77). He continues that this process is the "mind speaking through the body" (ibid.), that it is bodily intelligence that is both pleasurable and powerful. To "act in concert with one's own ability and sensibility brings a meaningfulness to life" (ibid.) is considered unavailable to those not engaged in a process involving motor-sensori experiences, or bodily-kinaesthetic knowledge as defined by Gardner (1990). The physical experience of producing something is considered to have a profound affect on the maker, but the possibility for revolutionary change through art-making is often suppressed in favour of presenting art-making as a tool in producing responsible law abiding citizens.

Chabani Manganyi offers a description of how art making can empower someone to act and manifest their psyche, and dispel "false consciousness" (Manganyi 1991: 9) that resides in oppressed people through unleashing their unconscious resources. Manganyi explains that the unconscious is a mediator of the oppressed (black) experience and is given life in the art of the people. Art, "like unconscious process, possesses the quality of shocking us out of our complacency by reflecting those contradictions and dimensions of human existence which prey on us while we sleep" (1991: 10). The black (artist) writer differs from "his or her community to the extent that the silent and secret anguish forms itself finally into images and not into instant action during a propitious moment" (Manganyi 1991: 21). But this image goes through a period of gestation before being fully exposed, and Manganyi considers that artists, like the community as a whole, need to come to terms with "ambivalence, self-intoxicating resentment and violence against the self" (ibid.). Instead of being externalised violently, the unconscious in the artist is "directed towards a more 'creative' course", allowing it to mediate both itself and a possible acting out in the

social sphere (ibid.). The resultant images have been forced "from formlessness into clarity, and through the creative act, the artist also transforms subjective experience into the realm of the universal – the natural community" (ibid.).

Manganyi asserts that the artist as "a radical positivist is located midway between historical and metaphysical rebellion" (1991: 21), while also declaring that the artist is enchanted by the charisma of an image (ibid.). He resolves this apparent contradiction by stating that while artists' preferred solution to problems of subordination and its consequent, violent and rebellious impulse is symbolic rather than practical, their response is ritualistic, involving their whole weight on a "symbolic level in the place of a real murder [or other act of rebellion] as a social and political act" (1991: 22). The outcome of this creative act is a new level of clarity and confidence, even authenticity, where the "'I' after the ritual is no longer a grammatical fiction" (ibid.). This is achieved through subduing the impulse of violence into a shocking but realistic image, that has consequences for social action and representations of the self in public, restoring identity to the artist as radical positivist (ibid.). Fabre-Lewin concludes, "through the arts in therapy we have channels for resolution and revolution [...] that working with the arts process provides a safe territory to explore and experience strong emotion through the interaction of our bodies with art materials" (1997: 123). The key notions here are "resolution" and "revolution"; and while Manganyi has explained the possibility for their reconciliation, it is more appealing to gloss over this process in one of two ways: on the one hand art-making is described as a mystical force that is not meant to be understood, while on the other it is given an explicit instrumental and moralising power.

Privileging the innate and intuitive understandings of creating, separating them from rebellious, intellectual or scholastic understandings of art making, conforms to the psychosocial paradigm. This is favoured over conceiving "natural connections of perceptual, reflective and scholastic artistic knowledge" (Gardner 1990: 46). This distrust for intellectualism as it relates to art-making is considered to enable art-making to be more inclusive, recognising the necessity of creativity for everyone, but as will become apparent, this might be at the expense of the power of art to transform in such a way as has been described above by Manganyi. This concern is an

important theme throughout the thesis, for while the sensuous experience of being-in-the-world (after Merleau-Ponty), or Warnier's "techniques of the body" (2001: 10), privilege the "bodily practice of the subject" (ibid.: 11), recognition of this is often submerged beneath formulaic calls for "holistic growth". And there is an unnerving similarity between some descriptions of the worthiness of creativity or making that exclude the reflective or intellectual aspects of art-making, which can be identified in both historical and contemporary concerns for promoting self-discipline and responsibility in other people through art or making. A recent piece of research commissioned by the Craft Council of Britain concluded that learning through making could instigate within the maker the following competences:

- Ability to cooperate
- Initiative, energy, persistence and self-discipline in tasks
- Acceptance of responsibility
- Conscientiousness, honesty and reliability
- Ability to comprehend through listening, reading and doing
- Ability to communicate when doing things. (Eggleston 1998: 7)

This tentative and rather muted presentation of what art can do and the impact that it can have on the maker links creative enterprises to moralising agendas by those attempting to affect the behaviour of others, yet this is still considered to be empowerment. Louise Morley writing in Britain in the mid 1990s, explains that the "concept of empowerment (but not necessarily the ideology), has been usurped by the New Right" (1995: 1). That the word empowerment has lost its radical, politicised roots, often being "reduced to simplistic behaviourism, seeking socially decontextualised personal change" (ibid.: 2). Empowerment has come to be used as a "rhetorical device without being carefully defined by its wielders [...] it has been drained of its critical edge" (Kreisberg, quoted in ibid.). Morley explains that by focusing on individual agency, rather than on structures, empowerment could be perceived as an extension of the New Right's commitment to self-sufficiency" (ibid.). The perception of empowerment as "power to" means "confidence and self-efficacy to take responsibility for stating and achieving personal goals [and] is dependent on a psychodynamic formulation" (ibid.: 8). Empowering interventions might "muzzle the possibility for collective action for social change" (ibid.: 6), through utilising the very language of liberals and Marxists including Paulo Freire, who introduced interactive

methods in which learners moved out of passivity and into dialogue with educators. Morley conceives that there is a modernist rationality embedded in the idea of empowerment, suggesting that outcomes rationally follow interventions (ibid.: 1). This intervention has therapeutised notions of self-empowerment and self-knowledge.

Identity Matters

Throughout this thesis it will be necessary to talk about black,[6] coloured, Indian and white South African identities as well as gendered identities. In South Africa such classifications stem from the legal categorisation of these very terms, as "proto-ethnic divisions" (Zegeye 2001: 6), legalised by the system of apartheid installed by the National Party, which governed South Africa between 1948 and 1994, an administration that represented both white Afrikaans and English-speaking voters. When translated from Afrikaans, apartheid means "separate development", and its principle architect was considered to be J B M Hertzog who founded the National Party in 1913. Howard Winant has argued for a critical theory for the concept of race that must apply to contemporary *political* relationships, which must apply in an increasingly *global* context, and which must apply across *historical* time (2000: 185, original emphasis). This would account for the saliency of race as a social construct and reality which forms a relatively impermeable part of our identity (ibid.: 184), while also appreciating the performative aspect of race (ibid.: 185). Stuart Hall details the ways in which racial identities are constantly crossed and recrossed by the categories of gender, class and ethnicity.[7] Drawing on psychoanalysis and feminism, Hall exposes the structure of identity as always being constructed through ambivalence (2000: 146 – 7). It is a process, a narrative, a discourse, that is always told from a position of the Other, that is historically constructed and always positional (ibid.: 152). Ramphele and Boonzaier clarify the difference between sexual differences and that of gender: "sexual differences are something that we are born with; they refer to basic and unchangeable biological facts. Gender roles and

[6] The term "black" has been and remains a contentious term in South Africa; it was used by the Black Consciousness Movement (1960s – 1970s) to describe all people of colour. Others have favoured using "African" to describe black people, but this has the potential to create confusions due to contentious claims made by some white South Africans who want to be recognised as African (Steyn 2001b: 103).

[7] The difference between "race" and "ethnicity" is often confused, for while "race" refers to supposed biological differences, characterised by physical characteristics, "ethnicity" refers to alleged cultural, language and religious notions of group cohesion combined with one of racial identity.

relationships, on the other hand, are socially learned, reinforced and modified by the economic, political and cultural environment in which we live" (1988: 154).

While race in South Africa has been theorised and denounced as a construction (see Erasmus 2001), we need to recognise the impact it has had South Africa where "false or imaginary assumptions about race [came] to have such powerful social and political effects" (Nuttall 2000: 4). Boonzaier notes that there has been "surprisingly little research into how laypersons (as opposed to politicians or academics) understand race" (1988: 65). In this context, it is useful to understand the notion of race as "common sense made juridical" (Posel, in Nuttall, 2000: 4), that is, as translated into a set of apparatuses and technologies, the aim of which is the regulation of the everyday perceptions, imaginations and behaviours of people on a large scale (ibid.), such as achieved by apartheid. The negative connotations associated with "race" are universally recognised, but writing in the late 1980s, Emile Boonzaier explains that in South Africa "this has merely resulted in 'race' being replaced by euphemistic substitutes such as culture, ethnic group, nation, population, people, community or *volk*" (1988: 64, original emphasis).

There has been an abundance of academic analysis on "whiteness" over the last two decades particularly in the USA (see Bonnett 1996), starting with David Roediger (1991), and have been called "White People (meaning those engaged in analysing whiteness)" (Ware and Back 2002: 6). Many of these writers have "baulked at the notion of doing away with all racial categories and have instead settled for the deceptively easier job of trying to remove the undesirable elements from whiteness without rocking the boat of raciology that keeps the whole concept in motion" (ibid.: 6). One such example is the editors of *White Reign* (Kincheloe et al 1998), who define the goal of a critical pedagogy of whiteness as consisting of "creating a positive, proud, attractive, antiracist white identity that is empowered to travel in and out of various racial/ethnic circles with confidence and empathy" (1998: 12). While another example of the saccharine "realisation" or "awakening" of whiteness, is Alice McIntyre's *Making Meaning of Whiteness* (1997). In this book, aimed at awakening white teachers to their prejudices, McIntyre describes her own "moment of racial awakening", which involved her realisation that white people were only concerned for white children and not black children as well (1997: 1), before explaining that it was

the first stage of a journey, a journey that involved and *continues* to involve realising that:

> similarity can blind us in our own complicity in the perpetuation of racist talk and the uncritical acceptance of racist actions. It is about the need to learn by doing – to engage and reengage whites in discussions about whiteness and to continue to develop strategies for critiquing the very discussions we generate. It is about publicizing and politicising our whiteness – being vulnerable and 'fessing up' to how we contribute to the routinization of racism in our teaching practices. (1997: 7)

Vron Ware and Les Back have written a timely book in which they challenge and criticise "White People" (2002: 6) for their "pragmatic and altogether more timid proposals that do not actively seek to disrupt existing frameworks" (ibid.). Instead, they propose a "vigilantly antiracist position, which resists any move to civilise the history of white supremacism in the mistaken belief that this is the only way that white people can take their rightful place at the table of multiculturalism" (ibid.: 14). Another means by which "routine normativeness of whiteness" (ibid.: 5) is realised is through "the harangue-flagellation ritual" that Elisabeth Lasch-Quinn forefronts in her insightful book, *Race Experts* (2001). Lasch-Quinn locates the beginning of this ritual in the USA, where it is "a syndrome of white liberal guilt and black self-assertion that became prominent in the mid-1960s, as the civil rights coalition lost its cohesiveness and direction, and has since become a stock theme in our popular culture" (2001: 5). This ritual is a symptom of an interracial complex that has become part of "the texture of integration" (ibid.: 3) in American society.

Lasch-Quinn shows how psychology came to be a tool for addressing race relations in the US (2001: 132), but emotional literacy has also had a significant role to play in negotiating race relations in South Africa, or more specifically, Cape Town. Conceptions of multiculturalism have been conceptualised as being realisable through emotional expression, which all South Africans can relate to. Psychosocial intervention comes to play a role in facilitating these interactions. These roles and actions are gendered as well as raced, and this thesis will seek to elucidate reasons why white women are often the primary instigators of therapeutic intervention. It is necessary to consider the particular position(s) that white women feel they have, considering the understanding of their ability to empathise with others and to have a

natural affiliation with oppressed people. This will inform how many react to role-playing in rituals of interaction and the compatibility and interest in psychosocial programmes. This is to "try to come to grips with individuals' experiences of being a gendered subject" (Moore 1994: 48), as well as a raced subject.

Richard Dyer has drawn attention to the way that whiteness can become invisible to those who are caught up in its glare (1988 and 1997), Ruth Frankenberg has also taken a social constructionist approach to race and racism in the USA. Frankenberg has excavated the means by which white women come to be the norm for thinking of women (1993: 9). While this is very valuable for my research, Frankenberg considers that in overcoming unconscious and conscious racism, it is vital that white women engage with their own white guilt and complicity with respect to racism (1993: 188) (see also Ringrose 2002: 309). Pragmatism is considered to be the means through which white women can realise their "determination neither to evade the spectre of racism nor to be mesmerized by it and thereby frozen into inactivity, but rather to engage systematically in the process of making change" (Frankenberg 1993: 187). Moreover, "pragmatism would make women feel humble in their approach to social change" (ibid.) while being fully engaged in that process. This is to advocate the harangue-flagellation ritual, manifested in the importance of being humble, dialoguing with others and repositioning whiteness in relation to others, but which does not "rock the boat" (Ware and Back 2002: 6).

It is worth explicitly stating that white women seem to have been particularly affected by this desire to help others and have turned to texts such as Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, interpreting it as offering guidance in how to help oppressed people. This guidance legitimises "intervention" on the basis that to sympathise is to empathise with others and thus to "know" their pain/suffering. Many consider this is because of women's special intuitive ability to empathise with others (see Prekel 1996 and Root 1992). Before considering this relationship in more detail it will be useful to consider this notion of empathy. Tanya Luhrmann considers this word to be central to how people relate to other people and recognise what it is to be human. Luhrmann explains that we are not transparent to one another, "so empathy is never pure", for we "empathise with other people from within our own expectations" (2001: 275). Moreover,

> Those expectations have what I have come to think of as an 'architecture'. They are built from the way we conceive of and imagine the persons we consider before us, the persons we hope to be ourselves, the way we expect suffering people to treat us, the way we learn to treat them. And that architecture is often not visible to us: we simply empathize, and feel compassion for certain people in certain ways. (Luhmann 2001: 275).

What we can take from this, is that to empathise is to judge, to come to a decision that "implicates morality" (ibid.: 280). This supposed ability of white women to empathise with "others" has been subject to an historical analysis by Vron Ware (1992) and Zine Magubane (2004) who consider this empathy in relation to the beginnings of a feminist movement in Britain. Vron Ware's book, *Beyond the Pale* (1992), sets out to consider the links between racism and male dominance, "so that being against one form of oppression involves the possibility of being against another" (1992: xix). And while concluding that "political unity between women across race and class is potentially one of the greatest forces for change in the world, there is nothing about being a woman which necessarily guarantees that unity" (1992: 254). Through looking at the biographies of many different white women involved in the abolitionist and anti-lynching campaigns, Ware considers that there may be links in the way that both black people and white women have been differently dominated as a result of racist and masculinist hierarchies in British history (ibid.: 252). This conviction leads Ware to investigate connections between the beginnings of a feminist movement and the abolitionist movement.

Campaigners encouraged other women to engage in the abolition movement, through the expression of empathy as a moral and religious issue, through the notion that it was a moral crusade that "claimed Christianity as the true religion of emancipation" (Ware 1992: 60). The language was not only infused with biblical metaphors and references, but references were chosen that were considered to be particularly suitable for women, for women were "generally thought to 'feel' and 'suffer' more than men, and would therefore be more able to imagine themselves 'also in the body' of the oppressed slaves, and thereby identify with their powerlessness" (ibid.: 61). According to Ware, these campaigns did not appear to be radical, because by linking their own subordination to that of black people, women were referring to the Christian ideal of inner strength that might be possessed by the physically weak and vulnerable

(ibid.: 69). Ware states that women were provided with a means to use their influence in the public sphere, as legitimate campaigners through the context of performing moral and religious duties (ibid.: 69). In this book, women are presented as feeling an affinity with the suffering of black people, and able to conduct campaigns on their behalf by behaving in particular ways that were sanctioned by the larger society; their natural ability to tap into the suffering of others and the seeming conformity with Christian principles.

From a more critical position, Zine Magubane considers the role that the idea of race played in the emergence of the idea of civic action in Britain during the nineteenth century, in her book *Bringing the Empire Home* (2004). She specifically focuses on reactions to events in South Africa during this period from specific groups in England, and how images of these events were used to represent their own political marginalisation. Magubane considers how the suffering black body came to be such "an extremely malleable ideological construct" (ibid.: 124), in the various struggles aimed at overcoming class inequalities and sex inequalities. One example that Magubane details, is how suffragists were able to use images of the Anglo-Boer war (both pro and anti-war) to assist in the struggle for women's parliamentary enfranchisement. Josephine Butler, a pro-war suffragist, spoke about the suffering of black South Africans at the hands of the Boers; "painting the war as an exercise in imperialistic chivalry designed to save suffering Africans from the Boers' depredations" (ibid.: 122). Butler presented the war as a moral crusade: "her deployment of the suffering black body was strategic in that she used amelioration of black suffering to deny the fact that war was a coercive intervention by the state on behalf of the expropriating classes" (ibid.: 124). Magubane explains that by taking this stance, Butler denied the "essentially political power of the disposition of power between capital and labor, [...] the formal equality of political rights would have minimal impact on class inequality" (ibid.). What can be concluded from this is that "a liberal democratic system [makes] some forms of exclusion more entrenched at the same time as it adopts more inclusive principles" (ibid.: 128). These two descriptions of white women empathising with others offer a model upon which to consider how the notion of empathy benefits those doing the empathising that will need to be considered throughout this thesis, as it seeks to investigate the motivations for participating in various causes, while maintaining respectability in white society.

White women have been in positions to implement pastoral care initiatives, which were (and still are) ambiguous, in their efforts to empower but also to control black others. Anne McClintock draws out the many contradictions that "crisscrossed" through the writings of Olive Schreiner;[8] "her sense of exile from social community redeemed by a revelation of cosmic unity, the interdependence of women, the fluid sliding between roles of mother and child, the allegorical association between writing and childbirth, her projection of the principle of difference onto the anger of African women and her sense of writing as a radical project of self-creation and self-justification" (1995: 274). But McClintock makes explicit the specific experience of black women during apartheid, stating that their problems were not even faced by black men, let alone white women; "Far from being universal problems, they are problems that are face black women alone [...] Only by the most contorted efforts can they be whitewashed as the universal dilemmas of 'Greek tragedy'" (1995: 304). bell hooks (2000) and Chandra Talpade Mohanty (1991) have both contributed to a body of criticism concerning the claims made by white feminists that they identify with black or "third world women", on the basis of being "sisters" (Mohanty 1991: 56).

Ramphele and Boonzaier note that gender has been a neglected topic in South Africa, having been overshadowed by race (1988: 153). Marion Arnold begins her book *Women and Art in South Africa* (1996) by stating that she is "a woman who is white – something that is a little different from being a white woman, which I was until the birth of democratic South Africa in April 1994" (ibid.: Preface). This preference of presentation as primarily a woman is one that strives to put distance between herself and the very real and stark differences that persist in South Africa that are based on racial difference. This is a means of seeking a new understanding of self in the "new" South Africa that seeks to diminish the significance of race, in favour of emphasising connections with other women.

The fallacy of such thinking is considered in detail by Deborah Mindry, who observes that the "disciplinary, moralizing ideologies of virtuous (and 'natural') womenhood have been considered core characteristics of modes of philanthropic power" (2001:

[8] Olive Schreiner, a writer, was born in 1855 to missionary parents in a rural part of South Africa.

1202) that are shared by both black and white women. Under apartheid, this level of interaction between women was not considered to be a threat because "humanity, compassion and feminine affect in general, and philanthropy and charity were forms or aspects of feminine virtue that had long fit without subversion with the gendered ideologies of the apartheid state" (ibid.). It is in this environment that a moralising discourse about gender made claims "on the basis of naturalizing, essentialist views of women's greater inborn concern for 'the people'" (ibid.: 1201). But behind the façade of sisterhood, "relationships between first-world and third-world women are shaped within this philanthropic ('doing good for one's fellow human being') mode of power" (ibid.: 1202). Most crucially, Mindry observes how both first-world and third-world women perceive the relationship between them as unequal. "First-world women see themselves as having greater access to resources, wealth, and/or knowledge. They often see this as a position of privilege that entails obligations or responsibilities to assist the poor and oppressed" (ibid.). This is similar to Alex Argenti-Pillen's work on the "Cinnamon Garden Culture", about the Sri Lankan female elite who provided humanitarian aid work to rural areas affected by the civil war. The middle-class elite, working with the international aid agencies, considered the providing of services "at the 'grass-roots' level" (2003: 203), as central to their self-presentation; even believing that their position as experts can engineer a "nationalist hug or embrace of the whole country in all its corners" (ibid.: 204).

The Black Sash is probably the most famous example of a women's organisation in South Africa (Spink 1991: 308). It was predominantly a white women's anti-apartheid organisation which began in 1955, when six white English-speaking Johannesburg women met for tea "to do something" about the bills being proposed by the still newly appointed National Party (Michelman 1975: 24). The Black Sash refused to become a multi-racial organisation, defending its decision on the grounds that "part of their effectiveness lay in their white, upper-class image and their social and political respectability" (ibid.: 42). It also saw itself as "a new and powerful force for education of the white community that needed to be cautious in order to be successful (ibid.). Since 1994, it has become a professional one that seeks to keep the government accountable to welfare reforms, focusing on vulnerable groups, such as women, the elderly, disabled and the unemployed (www.hrdc.unam.na/rsa_bst.htm). Kathryn Spink notes the recognition the Black Sash received from the new elite

(1991: 290), while Desmond Tutu wrote the foreword for her book. The Black Sash remained a respectable organisation in the eyes of white society as well as with the new elite of South Africa, and Spink talks of the "emotional transition" needed to fulfil its role as a human rights organisation, "if necessary in opposition to the very 'angels' whose side it had shared" (ibid.: 291), who were now to make up the new government. More recently, Michelle Rosenthal has researched a feminist nongovernmental organisation (NGO) in the Western Cape (South Africa), considering the contested meanings of political participation and empowerment within Rape Crisis (RC), that "requires us to consider how these differences are related to the legacy of apartheid inequalities" (2001: 98). Rosenthal observes that looking closely at what members of RC say enables her to "see how seemingly neutral values such as feminist empowerment are often racialized in practice" (ibid.). Rosenthal concludes that empowerment as practiced by RC members is not equally liberating, rather than being a universal experience of political power for these women, it remains fractured along racial fault lines (ibid.: 100).

Nelson Mandela sought to deal with a potential white identity crisis after the first democratic elections in 1994, by stipulating that white people have a role to play in the new South Africa (Mandela 1994: 680). Mandela's administration was symbolised by the Rainbow[9] "a dramatic metaphor simultaneously referencing a divine peace-offering following the storm, the promise against its recurrence, and a spectrum of colours united into the whole" (Law 2000a: 17). However, such an optimistic and revolutionary view has been criticised (Alexander 2001: 479); "Rainbowism", as defined by Phumla Gqola (2001: 98), consists of the following intertwined and competing processes through which:

a) the label "rainbow nation" grew synonymous with "South Africa";
b) the invocation of the collective "rainbow nation" stifles rigorous discussions of power differentials;
c) the inherent contradiction contained within a label which superficially emphasises difference but prevents its discussion is enabled. (Gqola 2001: 99)

Gqola further clarifies that the rainbow nation's stress on "a precarious unity is based on the erasure of difference and the minimising of the continuing effects of power

[9] Desmond Tutu first spoke of the "Rainbow children of God" (1995).

differentials on members of the South African body politic" (ibid.: 100). The inability for Rainbowism to be revolutionary is further considered by Zimitri Erasmus, conceding that the multicultural or "depoliticising discourse of rainbow nationalism" consists of the "overused South African metaphor of 'unity in diversity'" (2001: 20), making it "blind to power relations inherent in cultural formation and representation" (ibid.). Moreover, "by insisting, simplistically, that we should be blind to 'race', it makes it more difficult to name and recognise the importance of articulating and working through antagonism and conflict" (ibid.). The sloganeering inherent in such an attitude legitimates a denial of power inequalities and encourages a defensive stance in negotiating interactions with others.

Many white South Africans have sought to rethink their whiteness, and Melissa Steyn has considered this in relation to the crisis of identity they have experienced since the end of white minority rule in 1994. In her book, *Whiteness Isn't What it Used To Be* (2001b), Steyn states that she "centres South African whiteness" (2001b: 171); not a singular whiteness, but "the interplay, the overlaying, of many different stories of whitenesses, from plural sources, that our understanding of the phenomenon is made more complex, and freer from monological thinking" (ibid.). Steyn documented many individual stories of the experience of being white in South Africa during "this time of political and social transition" (2001b: 153), which she groups into five main narratives, describing how these different narratives offer various ways of dealing with being white in South Africa, as well as suggesting how these different identities will adapt to the displacement of whiteness as a hegemonic force in South Africa. Believing that all five narratives are "unmistakably stories of crisis" (ibid.: 155), Steyn considers all white South Africans to be grieving, to have experienced loss, consolidating the belief that all South Africans are traumatised (although Steyn does not use this term). While Steyn conceives of these narratives as coherent and distinct, I will propose a much more calculated appropriation of elements of the final three narratives proposed by Steyn, that are utilised by white South Africans who are interacting with black South Africans. What is characteristic of these three narratives are articulations of various "forays into observing the 'self', as opposed to simple projection onto the 'other'" (ibid.: 98), and attempts at thinking outside of the master or colonial narrative of racism, with varying success.

Two of the narratives can be identified as being concerned with notions of "community" and "selfhood" respectfully. The first, which draws on "community", narrates the practical aims and ambitions of many white South Africans who might be engaged in such cross-cultural enterprises as Thupelo, called "Don't Think White, It's Alright", and speaks of multiculturalism and the importance of being white in the new South Africa. In this narrative, being white has much to contribute to the "new" South Africa: "Eurocentrism is unproblematically accepted: believed to have been a trustworthy compass in the past, it is relied upon to provide the bearings for the future" (2001b: 93). Another means of maintaining white influence is through advocating liberal humanism, which is also drawn on by "A Whiter Shade of White". This narrative signifies a withdrawal into the self, where denial has an important role in seeking to avoid an engagement with difference. Variants of this narrative include "I don't think in terms of color" (ibid.: 105), and the desire to have "worked one's way clear of implications, to have achieved a safe place beyond the quagmire of 'race'" (ibid.: 8). It is a narrative that defensively protects the innocence of whites either through splitting off the racial aspects of the narrator's experience and social positionality, or by repressing racial partisanship through submerging it within an overarching identity (ibid.: 113).

However, another narrative, "Under African Skies (or White, but Not Quite)", consists of an awareness of "the need to let go of old selves, and to take on the responsibility of who they are going to become as they transform alongside the changes in the country" (2001b: 115). As Steyn continues, this is the narrative that "bespeaks those who are prepared to live closer to the edge, were the edge does not signify an abyss, but the transition where the familiar and unfamiliar meet" (ibid.). This narrative is pertinent to the extent that it articulates the desires of many of my informants as they talk of "extending themselves", of using revolutionary language to denote personal healing and/or coping mechanisms. However, the privileging of coping mechanisms limits the extent to which white South Africans may feel able to embrace the unknown. There is a sense of caution, signified by the use of being "responsible" in this very narrative, and again therapeutic enterprises can answer the calls for help with bringing this new self into being; the revolutionary edge is diminished by the call and demand for guidance. Thus, in my own research it will be necessary to consider the strategic usage of these particular narratives; while the first

speaks of practical measures by which whites can retain their whiteness, the second speaks of the denial of race; while the third speaks of ideals that are rarely invested in out of fear of losing one's whiteness (and position of power). With its focus on cross-cultural interaction in an art community, this thesis seeks to consider the strategic use of these narratives as witnessed in "rituals of interaction" (Nuttall 2000: 4). I will suggest that the philanthropic roles that white women have been able to fill, have lately been manifested in facilitators of psychosocial programmes, which legitimate involvement and intervention into the lives of other South Africans. Psychosocial intervention has come to be a means by which white South Africans feel they have something worthwhile to contribute to a multicultural community in South Africa.

The Promise of Community and its Relationship to the Therapeutic Turn

Whether as an environment for making art, or for confession and healing, when carried out in a community, a further set of ideals is attached to the activities conducted under the dictates of this concept. It is important to consider the appeal of community,[10] as I am primarily concerned with art-making in social contexts, and the specific impact this is considered to have on the makers and what they make. As has been alluded to already, community is a political term, "perhaps the political term" (Thornton and Ramphele (1988: 29). Thornton and Ramphele explain how the apartheid government co-opted popular international jargon of concepts like "community development" and "community participation" (ibid.: 30) in the 1980s to help their project of separation. In an insightful article, they further warn that communities do exist but they cannot be assumed (1988: 30). Vered Amit has edited a volume that seeks to understand what is so "compelling" about the term community (2002: 1). Amit concludes that while the contributors all acknowledge the conceptual, imagined dimension of the idea of community, but when it is "not also invested with social content and context, that is to say when it is not realized in *actual* social relations, it is difficult to account for the emotive valence which is attributed to it" (ibid.: 17, my emphasis). Benedict Anderson's influential book *Imagined Communities* (1983) has directed much contemporary understanding of the term, and also criticism; for he deliberately decoupled the idea of community from an actual base of interaction (Amit 2002: 6). Anthony Cohen defends Anderson's theoretical

[10] By choosing to use "community" to denote different sociological groupings throughout this thesis, I hope to contribute to the de-mystification of the term.

suggestion, explaining that he did not deny the reality of communities, but attempted "to capture what it is that people use the word to signify" (2002: 170). Nevertheless, Anderson's term has come to be deployed in instances where "face-to-face relations seemed to dissolve even further into less tangible 'structures of feeling', of belonging, of imagined communities" (Amit 2002: 9). There is perhaps another disconcerting reason for the interest in community, which involves a continuation of the distrust and intimidation that are associated with communities. The need to control them was vividly described by Gustave Le Bon in 1895, while Wilfred Trotter's *Instincts of the Herd In Peace and War* (1916) also influenced social psychology's suspicion of people.

White South Africans have seemingly been able to embrace community, or "African humanism" (Law 2000b: 24), through expressing adherence to *ubuntu*.[11] Richard Wilson explains that *ubuntu* is an ideology that encompasses notions of "reciprocity, respect for human dignity, community cohesion and solidarity" (2001: 9). The revitalisation of this ideology has been called on to enable Africans to "draw sustenance from our diversity, honouring our rich and varied traditions and cultures, and act together for the development and protection and benefit for us all" (Teffo 1999: 169). This suggests that there is a readily available, indigenous source or means of living harmoniously that would bypass Western concepts of individualistic liberalism in nation-building projects. The notion is considered to express something that is uniquely African, evoking an idea of a pure "African" form of selflessness; yet it is an elusive almost free-floating concept, whose trajectory can be traced through the utilization of it by different groups for ideological purposes. Both South African nation-builders and its grassroots disseminators have drawn on *ubuntu* as a popular idiom with which to transform the nation-building project into a meaningful identity for *all* South Africans.

The conflicting and problematic contemporary appeal to the idea of community in South Africa, and its subsequent mis/overuse will be an important consideration in my research, as it is often used solely to refer to both the deprivation and the spirit of

[11] *Ubuntu* is Xhosa, meaning "Motho ke motho ka batho babang", which translates as, "A person is a person through other people" (Simpson 2002: 248). *Ubuntu* is also associated with Mbeki's administration and revival of the African Renaissance (see Mbeki 1999 and Makgoba ed. 1999).

black communities (see Dhlomo 1995).[12] Black communities are also identified as being the grassroots, deemed to be a virtuous location (Mindry 2001: 1189). The promise of community (Merewether 1995) to redeem people is unsettling in light of the ideological connotations it has acquired, equally so is the investment made in empowerment, with its "mystifying rhetoric" (Cheater 1999: 7) that enables people to take responsibility for their own futures. The idea of empowerment resides in notions of "community, social relations, action and feeling" (James 1999: 19), where the belief is that individual empowerment can become communal empowerment with its encompassing promises for well-being. Furthermore, a popular conception of "good" and "normal" women, is their "embeddedness in family and community and their closeness to and feeling for the grassroots" (Mindry 2001: 1201), while Linzi Manicom notes the popular conception with "women" that resonates with the *ubuntu* idea of community responsibility (2005: 44). Following Jean Comaroff and John Comaroff's describing the current demands of civil society as a fetishism (2000: 334), I would suggest that in South Africa the appeal to community, or *ubuntu*, has also become a fetishism, which is similar to the much (ab)used word, empowerment (Cheater 1999: 9).

The process of fetishism that has been imposed onto community has been affected by the recent fetishism of perceiving the individual as a vulnerable being. Psychosocial work is considered as a grassroots means to continue the process, thus there appears to be desire to see community as realisable through individual confessions. The act of confessing to others is considered to create a community; hence the perceived worthiness of therapeutic intervention in South Africa, which relies on the sharing of emotions, and recognising the self as an emotional being. It is hoped that through psychosocial projects, with their focus on sharing, new communities will be forged which will be multi-cultural. The ideology of self-help and the promotion of self-discovery are now perquisites to realising community, for community is now achieved through "a sense of unity through the sharing of private thoughts" (Furedi 2004a: 66). bell hooks considers that it is possible to create community though progressive education, which is "the practice of freedom" (2003: xv); such teaching, through such activities as lifeskills programs, enables, for hooks, the recovery of "our collective

[12] It is equally important to be aware that in South Africa, "community art" and "community artists" are euphemisms for black art and artists (see chapter three).

awareness of the spirit of community" (ibid.). That community is conceptualised as a spirit, giving it anthropomorphic characteristics, enables it to be considered as capable of transforming individuals contained within it. But as I will attempt to unravel, talk of transformation at both individual and community levels, is often "superficially conceived" (Morley 1995: 8).

It is perhaps of little surprise that the pervasiveness of this psychosocial rhetoric in post-apartheid South Africa has reached organisations, which talk of participating in processes that heal individuals and their communities, thus representing a shift from rhetoric of the 1970s and 1980s where communities were conceived of as being sites of resistance.[13] "The residency artists and host colleagues often come to terms with the traumatic history of the country and hopefully through this inspire a better humanity for all" (Koloane, quoted in Xinisteris and Doepel 2001: 7). These processes are celebrated as ones that conflate the personal into the social, and the notion "spiritual" is also used to describe this; "when people talk of being 'spiritual' they generally mean a feeling of connectedness, the personal being connected to others [...] the 'community' (a 'community spirit') or even wider to the land and environment" (Fernando 2002: 206). This also reiterates the importance of situating the community in a physical space, a communal space that can be (re)claimed,[14] which is understood to facilitate a process of reconciliation and healing. Colin Richards writes that "[a] strong identity requires a sense of place" (1999: 364), but this is a shared sense of place, the realisation of which may be more problematic than the rhetoric would suppose.

Calls for a collective conscience have proved persistent. Achieving well-being still concerns the "development of the 'whole' human being (spiritual, mental, social, as well as other aspects, such as the economy and so forth); [this is also] an emphasis on *collective* development" (Hoppers, Moja and Mda 1999: 233 my emphasis). The always-already available "community" is still been called upon to heal past traumas,

[13] See Martin 2001 and Koloane 2000a.

[14] David Koloane has written, "apartheid was a politics of space more than anything [...] Claiming art is also about reclaiming space" (1995: 265). He adds elsewhere, "I always felt that I was infringing on other peoples spaces. And I think that it is virtually this sense of insecurity, which the apartheid system imposed on most communities over decades, which has always determined the particular ideological and political character of a 'space' in a South African context" (quoted in Xinisteris and Doepel 2001: 1).

but its ability to do so has been questioned by Charles Merewether in his article, *The Promise of Community* (1995). This brief essay presents a set of intriguing questions that are useful for thinking about notions of wellness and this "promise of community" to heal traumatised people. After asking what this promise is, "if not a dream of communicative freedom" (1995: 58), Merewether suggests that it entails a confrontation with entanglement and proximity, which poses a threat that has the potential to "unsettle the self"; creating a "proximity that [might] bear upon the other too closely, where the condition of subjecthood – the condition that makes it possible – also forecloses the end" (ibid. 60). Another question that Merewether asks is "what evidence have we that the will to return to this place of 'entanglement' can, in turn, lead to reconciliation and to a re-imagining of community?" (ibid. 61). The ideal of sharing everything, of being a living embodiment of this communal spirit that is at the heart of so much rhetoric, leads the principle character, Elizabeth, from a novel by Bessie Head, (used by Merewether) to a mental breakdown.[15] This becomes a warning against both the over/misuse of community as well as its inevitability. The possibilities for a community to be "a fabulous womb to which I return again and again" (Tamar Mason, quoted in Xinisteris and Doepel 2001: 6), while simultaneously enabling the communication of things so private and internal that they prescribe how they can be communicated, is held as realisable through making of art in a community. Merewether asks, "what then is the place literature or art occupies within this contemporary moment? How can they make a difference, a *community* of difference?" (1995: 62, my emphasis). It is these inter-linked issues of well-being, community and art-making that this thesis is concerned with.

Conclusion

The effect of psychosocial programmes is considered to save cultures, groups, or individuals from themselves, but according to Pupavac, this erodes the right to both national and individual self-determinism (2000). Advocates of psychosocial policies would not necessarily recognise their approach as representing an attack on the autonomy of societies and individuals. This is because today's incursions into individual autonomy are paradoxically made in the name of greater self-determination, empowerment and democratisation (Pupavac 2000). Peace educators

[15] *A Question of Power*, Bessie Head (1974)

advocating grass roots initiatives are inspired by Paulo Freire's writings. However, as Pupavac explains, "in practice, the bottom-up approach to empower individuals entails more professional intervention in people's lives and the erosion of individual autonomy" (2000). It is this paradox that lies at the heart of this thesis, through the following interlinked dynamics: therapeutic intervention and the role of art in allegedly realising self-empowerment and the corresponding role of sanitized discussions and fear of intellectualism and critical debate. Furthermore, these dynamics all take place within the realm of "rituals of interaction" (Nuttall 2000: 4) between different groups, both racial and gendered. Although interactions (social and professional) are often presented as being "challenging" and even "provocative", the possibility for this is limited, and has implications for the degree to which "real" interaction and communication, and breaking down the barriers of segregation can happen. We will begin by considering the role of pastoral care in South Africa, where "improving" enterprises have included making art and attending art classes, before considering how these initiatives prefigure psychosocial intervention in the particular context of contemporary Cape Town.

Chapter 2: Pastoral Care, Dis-ease and Making Art in Urban South Africa

Introduction

This chapter will consider the close affinity that pastoral care has had with making art as a means to realising the bourgeois individuated self. The close relationship that art making has with this enterprise will be shown to have established much of the groundwork for the introduction of psychosocial intervention in South Africa, which will be considered mainly through the impact that the TRC has had on dis-ease, who gets sick (after Last 1976: 110) and healing interventions. A materialist understanding of psychology and art therapy has offered alternatives to conceptualising mental illness and treatments. However, these have been submerged within the dominance of universalist humanist ideologies (after Richards 2004: 18) that considers themselves to be inclusive despite neglecting socio-political particularities. This chapter will also consider resistance to conforming to the interventions carried out by various enterprises, concluding that *critical* intervention is needed to counterbalance the intervention of therapeutic enterprises. This is not to deny the possibilities for self-determinism through Western education (see Comaroff and Comaroff 1997), and bourgeois selfhood, but it is to challenge education and empowerment initiatives to be on the terms set out by Paulo Freire in the previous chapter, namely on the terms of the oppressed.

Black Consciousness and Bourgeois Selfhood

Over the course of the twentieth-century in South Africa, urban renewal schemes have utilized the teaching of creativity (and other activities) as a means to improve morals and standards of life in urban areas (see Couzens 1985). Community development through education was first advocated by missionaries and was continued by South African church groups and other conscientious Christians (see Kuzwayo 1985). The possibilities for conceptualising the "free" self achieved through creativity, centres on a particular understanding of externalising the self, of being able to reflect on the self through reflecting on a material entity that the self has produced. While human agency is essentially defined as "the self"; this assertion demands a certain amount of reflexivity with which to be able to "*re-cognize* one's self" (Comaroff and Comaroff

1997: 19). Noncomformist missionaries[1] drew on the values of classic liberalism, which posited a world consisting of self-contained, right-bearing individuals who created society through their actions. Thus the social values of bourgeois ideology could be internalised as qualities of individual *personality*, with the virtues of discipline, generosity, and ownership being "embodied in self-control, self-denial, and self-possession" (ibid.: 170). Michel Foucault describes salvation as taking on a series of "worldly" aims and meanings: "health, well-being (that is, sufficient wealth, standards of living), security, protection against accidents" (1982: 215). Bourgeois selfhood which was exerted not only by the new police force, but also private ventures, welfare societies, benefactors and philanthropists. This doctrine of self-improvement through the techniques of pastoral care became the means by which the bourgeois self was to be realised.

While Dipesh Chakrabarty[2] and Keith Breckenridge[3] have unpacked the bourgeois project, rendering it incomplete, Zine Magubane explains that in a colonial situation, "Africans had to at least try to penetrate the psychology of their oppressors" (2004: 130). She considers the consistent attention paid to "unveiling whiteness – their relentless insistence that they could not only see whites, but see *through* them" (ibid. italics original). Magubane asserts that "to look directly was an assertion of subjectivity, equality" (ibid.), subverting the myth of the civilising mission. To assert one's subjectivity was to reject being an object and also to take literally the notion of a common humanity that was advocated by the colonial enterprise. Shula Marks has edited a correspondence between three women in South Africa between 1949 and

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[1] Nonconformist missionaries were from the London Missionary Society and Wesleyan Methodist Church, and were working in South Africa from the mid-nineteenth century.

[2] Chakrabarty considers the "deep ambivalences that marked the trajectory of the modern private bourgeois individuality in colonial India" (2001: 187). One of the consequences of European imperialism in India was to introduce the modern state and the idea of the nation with their attendant discourse of "citizenship," which, by the very idea of "the citizen's rights", splits the figure of the modern individual into public and private parts of the self. Chakrabarty explains that these themes have existed "in contestation, alliance, and miscegenation – with other narratives of the self and community that do not look to the state/citizen bind as the ultimate construction of society" (ibid.: 186).

[3] Breckenridge questions the totality of the "cascading remaking of individual subjectivity that has driven so much cultural change in this century" (2000: 346) associated with the rise of the modern notion of citizenship, premised on what Charles Taylor describes as 'free, self-determining subjects" (1989), through a discussion of the history of letter writing in South Africa. Through describing the use of amanuenses among migrants writing love letters while working in the gold-mines on the Witwatersrand (1900 – 1933), Breckenridge considers the consequences of this "incomplete grasp of selfhood" (ibid.: 339) which might have repercussions for the liberal democratic revolution in the new South Africa.

1951, which foregrounds the damaging impact "misguided do-gooders" (1987: 196) can have on those whom help is given. Marks draws attention to the mental harm done to Lily, by her ultimate rejection by a white liberal philanthropist called Mabel, who shows increasing impatience with Lily, attempting to make arrangements for her education and career as a teacher without consulting Lily (ibid.: 186). Lily's subsequent mental illness is considered by Marks in terms of social dis-ease (ibid.: 200), while the lack of black psychiatrists working in black psychiatric institutions (ibid.: 208) contributed to a depersonalisation of social circumstances. A black South African who recognised the pervasiveness of missionary and pastoral care in its ability to penetrate deep into the psyche of black people and the subsequent dependence on white intervention, was Steve Biko, an activist for black rights from the late 1960s until his death in police custody in 1977. Biko drew on Fanonesque notions of alienation and psychological colonialism in considering the impact that white liberal interventions had on black South Africans (Sanders 2002: 182).

Frantz Fanon was concerned with finding a psychodynamic interpretation of the black problem:

> The effective disalienation of the black man entails an immediate recognition of social and economic realities. If there is an inferiority complex, it is the outcome of a double process:
> - primarily, economic
> - subsequently, the internalisation – or, better, the epidermalization – of this inferiority. (Fanon 1986: 12 – 13)

For Fanon, the internalisation of a belief system imbued with racism damages the psyche of a black person causing alienation. Fanon drew attention to the connections between the psychological and the political, and the struggle that black people must go through in order to divest themselves of the violence of racism which was not just within themselves but intimately connected with the political world around them (Fernando 2004: 19). It was clear to Biko, leader of Black Consciousness Movement (BCM) that while the government's presence was very nearly overwhelming in concrete physical terms, the more damaging oppression was occurring psychologically. "Blacks had unconsciously resigned themselves to the malaise engendered by the ruling white minority" (Arnold 1979: xiv). Biko identified the immediate need for consciousness raising, which came to be manifested in his

concept of Black Consciousness. "In essence Black Consciousness represented a liberation movement of the mind, a psychological revolution aimed at forging Black thought and feeling into an amalgam of Black pride and ultimately Black unity" (ibid.). Biko understood apartheid as possessing an overpowering psychological grasp on the minds of Black people and he conceived of it as a twofold problem: "On the one side, following years of exploitation, Whites actually believed in the inferiority of Blacks. On the other, Blacks had developed an ingrained dependence fostered by White domination" (ibid.: xvii). To break the chains of oppression, and to escape a continuing sense of frustration, Biko explained that black people had to overcome a negative sense of self and the paralysis and erosion of Black will that stemmed from a systematic manipulation of Black minds by a government and a society that had long recognised the value of thought control (ibid.).

Steve Biko aimed to "decolonise the self" (Oliphant 1995: 258) and in its place attain an "envisaged self" (Biko 1987: 92), arguing that the liberation of black people depended on the role black people themselves were prepared to play (Oliphant 1995: 259). This, for Biko, meant recognising the role white liberals had as part of the "oppressor camp" (Biko 1987: 23), as well as missionaries (ibid.: 93). As facilitators of pastoral initiatives, both groups had a powerful influence over their black students, who "must constantly turn to [them] for guidance and promotion" (ibid.: 94). In rejecting this, BCM set out to encourage black achievements and culture; "we were intent on showing that not only were we black and beautiful, but capable of doing things for ourselves" (Smuts 2000: 29). Self-reliance became one of the main goals of BCM, which involved realising the capacity for blacks to initiate, control, evaluate and interpret development efforts relevant to their own needs and was perceived as being "the pillar of empowerment for people who had hitherto relied on others to do things for them" (Ramphele 1991: 169).

N Chabani Manganyi has described Black Consciousness as a philosophy and social movement, "the dynamic involved seems to be one in which a colossal attempt is made to help the victims of racism to arrive at a more profound appreciation of their alienation and to unmask the limits of false consciousness by unleashing the welter of

their 'unconscious resources'" (1991: 9). Manganyi[4] is a black South African clinical psychologist who wrote a series of essays in the 1970s and 1980s, which were published in the early 1990s, concerning among other things, the dominance of racism in psychological practice in South Africa. Manganyi considers the position of psychology in South Africa paradoxically, for "it is the conditions specific to South Africa that the power of psychology resides in its potential as a liberating force and as an instrument of racial oppression" (ibid.: 144). He believes that "a heavy-handed critique of current theory and practice is imperative [as] the country needs a psychology of everyday life – a psychology concerned with the practical problems of the majority rather than the lifestyle alienation of the dominant classes" (ibid.). For Manganyi, psychosocial health is achievable through "the astute application of psychological thought to the daily problems of ordinary people" (ibid: 6). Manganyi explicitly states that the "ordinary people" are the black majority, and considers the "black self" (ibid: 23), to be distinct from the white self. Manganyi describes the difficulty of working with the minority elite, "while the everyday problems of the majority are marginalized in theory and practice" (ibid.) before turning to consider the psychosocial practice of racism that has seemingly been given legitimacy through psychology.

Manganyi draws a series of distinctions between the experiences of black and white people living in racist societies through an analysis of first and second order problems experienced in the process of individuation. He explains that for the individual, the problem of the body is both personal and social, and while being a universal predicament, the race-supremacist societies "compound the first-order problems of anality with second-order problems created in the interest of social control, culture and civilisation" (1991: 56). Manganyi explains that the denial and fear of the body results in "a psychological amputation through repression of the lower axis of the body"; a result of which means that the particular "Aryan consciousness sought, through symbolic substitution and compensation, to develop a phantom sociological schema of the white body which provided a deceptive impression of unity and wholeness" (1991: 60). And while the superordinate (racist) is preoccupied with problems that are predominantly metaphysical, their victims' problems are mostly

[4] It is worth noting in passing that Manganyi was also a trustee for Thupelo for a short time when the workshop was based in Johannesburg in the late 1980s.

social and historical. The negative values associated with blackness become vehicles in racist societies for the racist's attempts to adapt to their estrangement from the reality of their bodies (1991: 54). For a devaluation of the lower axis of the body (achieved through repression) is compensated for by an over-valuation of the upper axis symbolically identified with rationality, spirituality and other cognitive functions (ibid.: 49). In rejecting these notions, Manganyi considers that psychology needs to be recognised as a historical discourse and is greatly influenced by "Soviet psychology – with its different criterion of truth and its socially-utilitarian bent in favour of transformative types of knowledge and practice" (1991: 152).

Manganyi believes in the necessity of locating psychology in South Africa within a historical and materialist understanding of psychology that would expose the idea of an innate, common human nature as absurd. For Luria, a Soviet psychologist whom Manganyi admires, the individual's higher psychological processes have a social origin, and are mediated in their structure and utilitarian in their function (in Manganyi, 1991: 150). Soviet psychology contends that abilities and personal qualities are always formed in the process of development, especially during education (1991: 152). This acts as a materialist critique of dominant psychology which is "idealistic and mentalistic since it allocates a significant theoretical space in its discourse to a private, internal sphere that is independent of the material world" (ibid.). Moreover, this Western or Anglo-Saxon psychology is ahistorical, which is supported by the assumption of a common human nature which is immutable at all times (ibid.). Manganyi has set about grounding psychology in the experiences of South Africa's black majority, where psychology can be truly empowering as defined by black people using the services. He has set about achieving this with the establishment of *Ububele*, the African Psychotherapy Resource Centre, of which he is one of the trustees, along with Bongi Dhlomo-Mautoa.[5] Among its many aims is to address the necessity of training for skilled professionals to be proficient in the African context, and to address the shortage of therapists and counsellors who can converse in an indigenous language (www.ububele.org.za).[6]

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[5] Bongi used to be the coordinator for the Thupelo workshops when they were based in Johannesburg.

[6] For a generally optimistic account of the progressive developments being undertaken in South African psychology, see van Niekerk and Shefer in Duncan et al (2001). This collection presents itself as a critical account of the country's psychology profession and its relationship to the production of racism. See also Mohamed Seedat, who has proposed a four-fold liberatory psychology (1997), to free

The language used by the BCM shares many similarities with the aims of empowerment described in chapter 1, and Lasch-Quinn has been quick to point out that Fanon's belief in the necessity of psychological freedom has resonated deeply with many American radicals (2001: 63). However, Black Consciousness, in its South African manifestation, privileges the corporeal experience of being-in-the-world, shifting the activity of the intellectual from the mental to the corporeal and from theory to praxis by emphasising embodiment and its differential psychosocial inscription (Sanders 2002: 198). It also takes account of economic, political and social factors, offering a more useful model for conceiving of psychic malaise and how to cure it. Moreover, it makes possible the claim that psychoanalysis can radicalise responsibility (ibid.: 186).

Art Education and Lifeskills Training in South Africa

South African liberals have considered themselves to be enlightened, since establishing their presence in the Cape during the nineteenth century. They were very influenced by the mid-Victorian ideal of social uplift through the instilling of values of hard work and self-help (Rich 1984: 1). For the most part liberalism has been the political expression of a small body of white educationalists, philanthropists, missionaries and social workers "concerned to alleviate the harsh economic and social consequences of industrialisation in a racially divided society" (ibid.: 123). While the ritualised nature of liberal opposition to apartheid has widely been seen as being a "fossilised and ineffective" (ibid.: 134) colonial importation, others have argued that liberalism (in general) creates dependencies through the guise of promoting personal autonomy (see Marshall 1996). In 1953, Black children's education was structured through the Bantu Education Act when education for black children became compulsory for the first time. This act manifested "the wider, modernizing Western state impulse to generate universal education for the 'public good'" (Lester, Nel and Binns 2000: 173). This was to support the segregationist policies of apartheid, but liberals also supported the Bantu Education Act, as it seemed to be a way of educating

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the discipline from the grasp of oppressors. The four stages are disillusionment; reactive critical engagement; constructive self-definition and finally, emancipatory discourse, praxis and immersion (1997: 261). That this process draws on the legacy of Paulo Freire makes itself attractive to holistic practitioners – see below.

black youth away from socially disruptive criminal and radical activity, whilst equipping them with essential skills to pursue their self-improvement (ibid: 174).

Colonial efforts in the social engineering of obedient subjects of a bureaucratic state concerned the following discourse: "how much 'civilising' would promote their projects and what sort of political consequences 'too much civilizing' would have in store" (Stoler and Cooper 1997: 7). This question was openly debated in the first art school for black South Africans, continuing in subsequent art centres, becoming further entrenched by the use of art education and practice as carrying moralising agendas. The three art organisations that will be discussed in this section anticipate the compatible relationship between art-making and psychosocial intervention. Artistic development among black artists was hindered by the continued perception of art-making as "recreation" for residents of townships by the authorities. Relations between black artists and the white intelligentsia became most apparent when the white liberal intelligentsia took on the role of providers of informal training. What came to be recognised as the cradle (see Powell 1995: 16) of urban black artists, was not an educational institution as such but a Recreational Centre that happened to be run by an artist.

The Johannesburg local committee for Non-European Adult Education set up a recreation centre called the Polly Street Art Centre for black South Africans living and working in Johannesburg in 1948. Many different activities were being introduced into the urban black community at this time, "like ballroom dancing, music, and boxing. Polly Street was started in the same spirit, to introduce all these sophisticated developments into the lives of blacks" (Koloane 1995: 261).[7] Cecil Skotnes, a liberal white artist, was appointed to the position of Cultural Recreation Officer of the Non-European Affairs Department (NEAD) of Johannesburg City Council, and took over the running of Polly Street. Art classes only offered weaving and there were just three art students according to Skotnes when he first arrived in the early 1950s (personal communication 30th April 2003). Skotnes explained to me that he set about professionalising the education, employing professional teachers and

[7] This is similar to the aims of the missionary, Ray Phillips, who saw the task of "the missionary as being to devise a 'Social Gospel' solving the problems of moralising the leisure time of natives" (Couzens 1982: 319, see also Couzens 1985 and Phillips 1938).

ending the weaving classes that had represented art education. Describing the location of Polly Street as dangerous, he credits it with as being "pioneering stuff run by professionals" (ibid.). Cecil formed a committee with a representative from Anglo-American, the welfare department of Johannesburg City Council and Father Huddleston,[8] while the one municipal employee would liase between municipality and the committee.

Skotnes's pride in professionalising Polly Street was considered more ambiguous among the art students attending his classes. During this time there was a general concern about imposing a Eurocentric approach to art-making, for fear that it would be "unauthentic for black artists, who ought to be depicting the life that surrounded them instead of aspiring to membership in an artworld whose centres were far away and putatively 'white'" (Littlefield Kasfir 1999: 98). Jack Grossert was an art organiser for the Department of Bantu Education, who was critical of formal art training for black students, and according to Koloane, Grossert drew Skotnes' attention to the spontaneous expression that was developing among urban black artists (1989: 218). Convincing Skotnes that the emergence of an indigenous expression was not dependent on the teaching of traditional forms, and moreover, that tuition of any kind was detrimental to the artists' natural ability to paint (ibid: 219). Nevertheless students at Polly Street were taught drawing, painting and sculpture, which equipped them with the tools and the confidence to subvert official ideologies and assimilate Western conventions. Students sought advice and tuition from Skotnes and the other teachers, in addition to formal lessons that took place once a week. Polly Street set a precedent for subsequent community art organisations, "awaken[ing] an awareness for the need for art tuition for black artists" (Koloane 1989: 227), and produced some of the well-known names among urban professional artists of the sixties, such as Louis Maqhubela.[9] Through utilising the resources available to them at Polly Street, these artists were able to overcome to some degree the belief that black artists had natural talents. Koloane explains that what made Polly Street important was that it was

[8] Huddleston was a missionary working in Johannesburg in the 1950s, before being forced to leave South Africa for his resistance to apartheid.

[9] Maqhubela was the first artist to break the "township" mould, through his own quest for artistic growth; "I was always at loggerheads with Skotnes over his insistence that black artists did not require any kind of tuition because of their natural ability to paint" (quoted in Koloane 1989: 219). Maqhubela moved to Europe where he felt able to pursue his career while transcending the aesthetic barrier he had experienced in South Africa.

"basically the first place where black artists could come together under one roof from different parts of Johannesburg and even further afield" (ibid.).[10]

Ambivalences around the functions and interpretations of the role of art education for black South Africans can be further discerned in a published report of Katlehong Art Centre written in 1990. Katlehong Art Centre (KAC) was started in Katlehong Township in 1977 by the East Rand Administration Board, with the aim to provide "constructive extra-mural programmes which would alleviate the 'juvenile delinquency' problem in the township" (Franks and Vink 1990: 15) in the wake of the Soweto uprisings.[11] A report was made of KAC in 1990 that interviewed many coordinators and teachers from other community organisations, and David Koloane was among those who wrote a report for it. His comments are interesting for their emphasis that the centre was primarily an "artists' workshop", providing a space for artists in the East Rand to come together (1990a: 188), Koloane aligns KAC with the, then, newly established Bag Factory, while elsewhere he states that the local community boycotted KAC because of its government connections (see Koloane 2000: 20). There were different and simultaneous emphases on KAC as an art centre, a craft centre and as a resource for the community (Frank and Vink 1990: 76). There was unanimous rejection of the idea of "art for art's sake" (ibid.: 102), for art was to be useful to the community (ibid.: 63), though what this contribution amounted to was vague. The authors identified self-help as being a key contribution that KAC was able to offer Katlehong Township; generating people's incomes through giving them a place to work, the products of which can then be given or sold to the community (ibid.: 70-71). Its ability to "help artists express their feelings freely through their work" (ibid.: 60) is linked with the ability to relate to "whites as people, not as employer and worker" (ibid.) and hints at the reconciliatory role that community organisations aim to have. The contradictory aims of and attitudes towards KAC are evidence of the ambivalent position that art-making and education for black people have had in South Africa. Community organisations struggled to provide art

[10] Polly Street closed in 1960, after NEAD's recreation section acquired new premises in a relatively new building known as the Jubilee Centre, which housed a music academy and a social work institution as well as the only library for black South Africans in Johannesburg (the BMSC had closed by this time). The NEAD recreation section was later moved to Mofolo Township where it still functions as the Mofolo Art Centre.

[11] The Soweto uprisings in 1976 were in response to the decision to impose tuition in Afrikaans (see Lester, Nel and Binns 2000: 199).

education not available or accessible formally, while also providing "meaningful" activities for urban black communities.

Community Arts Project (CAP) started in 1977, in Cape Town, with the intention of establishing "a space of free access to all peoples to discover and manifest their creativity, in contradiction to the master plan of separate development" (Nolte, unpublished: 2).[12] CAP taught drama and art courses in its main centre as well as at other centres and homes in Cape Town's townships, believing that "art is fundamental to the physical and mental well-being and growth of the young people in [South Africa]" (newsletter 1993). The establishing of CAP was a matter of negotiating effective use of resources and skills from those who had such privileges, who were identified as being white liberals. The emphasis on "community" under which CAP established itself, was to be a challenge for these artists who "assumed the possibility of creative production *outside* of interpersonal, political and organisational structures" (Nolte, unpublished: 3, my emphasis). The combined effect of the Soweto Uprisings and the growing awareness of the Black Consciousness Movement (BCM) meant that 1976 was seen by many white liberals as the year of their own "awakening" (Williamson 1989: 8), many contributing to the call for community empowerment (see Ramphele 1991). Thus as its website declares, CAP was about different groups of people's awareness of the "conscientisation of self and society" (www.museums.org.za/cap), negotiating the dialectic relationship between caring for oneself and one's community. It is worth noting the strategic use of liberalism, as well as (foreign) funding and the Church that CAP strove to adapt to, while being identifiable as a "struggle institution" (Maurice 2000: 51). Many groups from BCM backgrounds were able to "milk" the resources at CAP, due to BCM's attitude that they should use whatever space and resources were made available by white liberals, while not actively participating in the leadership of liberal organisations (Nolte unpublished: 8). CAP remained a broadly liberal organisation because of a lack of commitment by BCM users to shaping its direction.

CAP currently runs courses for predominantly unemployed young men, where they can develop skills *through* art; "CAP enabled me to educate people that art is

[12] Jaqueline Nolte wrote this paper for an exhibition or work produced at CAP at the South African National Gallery (SANG) (1999) but due to lack of funds the catalogue was not published.

important for the economy, health, environment, therapy, to develop lifeskills and for human resources" (former teacher Mthi, in Nolte, unpublished: 2). Teachers are both graduates from CAP and from Michaelis School of Art, and believe in the importance of art as a vital resource in facilitating "personal fulfilment". However the teachers also provide art training which has enabled students to develop the skills necessary to become professional artists, with many attending Thupelo workshops.[13] However, since 1994, with the opening up of access to formal education, CAP has lost much of its funding support, which suggests that CAP has continued to be associated with resistance and is struggling to make a case for its continued importance.[14] One means to attract funding and continue its importance has been the introduction of a compulsory lifeskills course for full-time students at CAP. As will be discussed below, the "new" South Africa has been conceptualised as a society or nation in transformation, which needs to begin at the individual and community level – through lifeskills. CAP considered itself to have a duty to promote lifeskills, as a means for producing socially adept individuals that art education alone is supposedly not capable of doing. While CAP's slogan was "Empowerment through Creativity", art education is not considered to have a significant enough role to achieve this by itself, so the lifeskills core course was introduced to deal specifically with self-development. Lifeskills comes under the rubric of psychosocial intervention, having been appropriated from its radical roots with Paulo Freire (2004). CAP now has a director who is coloured, yet there is pressure to conform to the interests of (white) funding bodies. Thus, while there is pride that CAP is finally being managed by the community/ies it aims to serve, it would be naïve to suggest that it is not pressurised to conform to particular standards set by funders, which are reflected in the (mis)use of notions of "communication", "dialogue", "empowerment" and "creativity" (see Rooth 1995).

Lifeskills have been defined as "coping skills that can enhance the quality of life, enabling a person to interact meaningfully and successfully with other people" (Rooth

[13] The story of Lionel Davis' arrival and subsequent involvement at CAP is held up as evidence of its success: a builder who was made redundant, he came across a large studio (CAP) that needed renovating. He helped with repairs and then started to draw and became involved in many activities, before becoming a teacher, coordinator and Trustee. He also became a Trustee for Thupelo, and now works as a guide at Robben Island Museum, for he was also a political prisoner held there in the 1970s.
[14] CAP has been described as being "but a shadow if its former self" by its present director, Graham Falken, (personal communication 6th March 2002).

1995: 2). These are skills that are considered vital to live in the community and the world effectively through or indeed because of having developed a clear sense of one's "totality of being" (ibid.). Lifeskills pamphlets also discuss issues such as personal hygiene, creating a direct link to pastoral care initiatives. Monica Macnamara defines lifeskills as "those skills which enable a person to function as happily and independently as possible in his or her own environment" (1995: 1). Macnamara is writing for carers of people with severe learning difficulties in the UK, recognising the importance of self-empowerment in leading to a more fulfilling life and thus personal identity (ibid.: xiv). The concept of lifeskills international, but has become very popular in the "new" South Africa through the vocabulary it employs and the egalitarian principles it is held to promote. This vocabulary focuses on ideas of sharing and experimental learning as instigating processes of healing and encouraging the realisation of "total freedom" (Rooth 1995: 65), yet also responsible understanding. Lifeskills is associated with notions of synergy, questioning, holistic empowerment and phrases such as "self-disclosure" and "moving forward". These slogans are accepted uncritically through the very use of terms such as "critical reflections" (Rooth 1995: 4), exposing them to accusations of hypocrisy (see Macedo 1994: 4). Lifeskills are also presented as being concerned with celebrating and sharing uniqueness within an environment that aims to "align values and energy" (Jamal 2002: 165). This is achieved through confession and role-playing, and both are considered to be means of realising democracy (Rooth 1995: 1). "Critical reflection" needs to be shared with others so as to be not merely acknowledged but verified as appropriate, which is to be responsible and focus on "positive" rather than "negative" qualities in other people (Rooth 1995: 34).

To assert the link between art-making and identity formation, CAP asked its students to undertake projects that explicitly aimed at exploring and identifying their (unique) identity. Students were given a photocopied depiction of a tree, which was to be individualised with their own characteristics being written on the appropriate sections. The aim of the exercise was to conceptualise oneself as a tree, with roots, a trunk and branches; the roots represented one's strengths, while the trunk represented one's weaknesses and the branches one's hopes and dreams. The students picked up on the importance of the notion of an inner self and other formulaic statements that are considered to display both individuality and empathy towards others. One student

listed her five strengths as being: reading, running, listening to Christian music, going to church and praying and lastly "my belief within myself". These worksheets are assessed by a teacher, which further consolidates the understanding that there is a right and a wrong way to be an individual. What is significant here is the understanding that the means to gain knowledge of one's unique identity is through a standard method; the tree became a template upon which the unique self could be materialised and realised. A standardised model of the self and what the self is to achieve has been coupled with the notion of freedom, which incorporates an idea of individuality and well-being.

However, this technique of autonomy has been criticised by Jean Francois Lyotard who considered autonomy, which was meant to lead to emancipation "as a bitter fraud" (in Marshall 1996: 192); while James Marshall considers this form of education to be an outcome of neo-liberal initiatives. "By emphasising skills and down-playing knowledge and understanding, and by emphasising information and information retrieval as characteristic of the educated person, neo-liberal education can be seen to be heavily embroiled in the security of the state and international capitalism" (1996: 191). The possibility for CAP to be a space for "black intellectuals" (Falken, quoted in Minty 2003) is, I believe, compromised by such interventions as the lifeskills course, which conforms to an instrumental approach to teaching.[15] Skills and information fit more readily into a set model, where there is little room for ambiguities, and it is this desire to diminish ambiguity that figures strongly in the surge in lifeskills training in Cape Town, while simultaneously emphasising the expressing of emotions. The influence of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) on notions of wellness will be considered below, and will further affirm the influence of Christian intervention and the therapeutic orientation that lifeskills has, enabling it to serve the expectations established by the TRC. First it is necessary to establish the particularity of Cape Town.

Cape Town and its Residents

[15] "Literacy within this perspective is geared to make adults more productive workers and citizens within a given society. In spite of its appeal to economic mobility, functional literacy reduces the concept of literacy and the pedagogy in which it is suited to the pragmatic requirements of capital; consequently, power disappear under the imperatives of the labour process and the need of capital accumulation" (Giroux quoted in Macedo 1994: 18).

Robert Thornton suggests that it is helpful to think of South Africa as a constellation of city-states (1996: 155), for there are three points of power and wealth in South Africa. They are Johannesburg in the central northern inland region, Durban on the east coast and Cape Town on the west coast. Each city-state has its own identity and allegiances (ibid.: 154), and it is from this position that Cape Town in its particularity needs to be considered. The city dubbed "the Mother city" of South Africa, in the Western Cape, has a reputation for being very conservative,[16] not only is it still very segregated, it has the infamous reputation of being the only district in which the National Party was re-elected in the first democratic elections in 1994. A factor contributing to this was the problematic relationship between black and coloured residents of Cape Town. In the 1994 elections, the majority of coloured people voted for the National Party in the Western Cape. The strength of their vote meant that the NP retained regional authority of the Western Cape. That they voted this way given the history of oppression and exploitation at the hands of the National Party is largely due to "the awesome power of propaganda" (Williams 1996: 23), which included resentment about the dominance of black people in the ANC.[17] When District Six, an unashamedly multicultural neighbourhood, was destroyed in 1966, as a result of being declared a slum area, it has been suggested that there was no other residential area that was able to replace its vibrancy. This has been particular to Cape Town, for while Sophiatown in Johannesburg (see chapter 3) was also destroyed in the 1950s, its reputation as a multicultural society, was considered to be relocated to other residential areas such as Yeoville (personal communication with Garth Erasmus 2nd April 2003). However the ability for this to be replicated in Cape Town has been more problematic, despite, as we shall see, the presentation of Woodstock as a "grey area".

Cape Town is the oldest urban area in South Africa, and by the end of the nineteenth century, it was a substantial metropolitan area with representative municipal government. Older parts of the town became decayed and housed a racially and ethnically mixed population under conditions of overcrowding and poverty. Indirectly, this led to Cape Town having the "dubious distinction of being the first

[16] Alan Paton (2002: 96 and 98) points to the increased tolerance of interaction in Johannesburg as opposed to Cape Town in the 1950s.
[17] See James, Caliguire and Cullinan (eds.) 1996 for a detailed analysis of this.

city in which homes of African residents were deliberately separated from those of other citizens" (Cook 1991: 27). An outbreak of bubonic plague acted as the catalyst and the government established Ndabeni location (ibid.). Government efforts in the Western Cape, particularly in the vicinity of Cape Town, continued to try to ensure that the area was "non-African" (Ramphele (2002: 18). In 1954 the Western Cape was declared a Coloured Labour Preference Area, this was the "beginnings of a deliberate policy, pursued by successive white governments, to discourage urbanisation of Africans, particularly in the Western Cape, and to reserve the area mainly for use by whites and coloureds" (Ramphele and Boonzaier 1988: 157). It became difficult for Africans to be employed in the Western Cape and made it illegal for Africans without employment to live in the region. Black men and women would migrate to urban areas primarily by economic necessity (ibid.: 158) from one of the "homelands".[18] The majority of black South Africans in Cape Town are identified as Xhosa, and this ethnic group had its "homeland" in the Eastern Cape, Ciskei and Transkei. Langa is recognised as the oldest township in Cape Town, having celebrated its 70th birthday in 2002, it was established just before Ndabeni was cleared for industrial development. Nyanga and Guguletu followed in the 1950s, however an average of 9,000 people were repatriated to Transkei and Ciskei each year for five years during this time (Cook 1991: 30). No more housing was provided for black people until 1983, when it was announced that a new town would be built, Khayelitsha, to accommodate legally resident Africans living in Cape Town. By the 1980s, almost all the working class population of Cape Town were living more than fifteen kilometres out of the city centre, and the longest journey-to-work became associated with ethnicity and low economic status (ibid.: 35). This ensured that one's sense of self was closely matched and managed through spatial boundaries, with social distance and spatial difference being closely coordinated (Ballard 2004: 54). Khayelitsha has become the second largest South African township after Soweto, which is considered to be a city in its own right.

[18] The ideology of apartheid and its associated legislation were based upon the assumption that "the South African population constituted a number of discrete and unassimilable groups" (Boonzaier 1998: 63). These groups were conceived as distinct ethnic groups that needed to belong to distinct geographical areas, including divisions between Africans. These plots of land or reserves came to be called "homelands", and the architects of apartheid considered themselves to be benevolent "trustees" of these "proto-nations" (Sharp 1988: 91).

The coloured population stemmed from the historically mixed relationships between freed slaves of Malay, Indian and African descent and white settlers, however, it is necessary to observe that coloured identity is not simply about "race mixture" (Erasmus 2001: 16).[19] Cape Town was considered to be the "natural" habitat for coloured people, with President P W Botha proclaiming this as recently as 1986, when he declared that the suburb of Woodstock should be proclaimed coloured (Garside 1993: 32). Parts of Woodstock, along with its neighbour, Salt River had not been "zoned" under the Group Area Act of 1950, however, the majority of Cape Town's coloured community had been moved out to what is known as the Cape Flats, some twenty-seven kilometres south-east of the city. Woodstock was developed as a suburb from the late nineteenth century, and is one of the oldest inner-city residential areas and has been racially mixed throughout its history (ibid.: 31). But in 1986, Woodstock came under the scrutiny of the government, and Lower Woodstock[20] was marked out as a coloured area in terms set out by the Group Areas Act. Jayne Garside explains that this state intervention and resultant community resistance and struggle to retain its historically mixed racial character, combined with the emergence of a new class structure with the invasion of middle class, white and coloured families, resulting in the gentrification of the suburb (ibid.). Woodstock is the closest of the Southern suburbs to the CBD of Cape Town, which has attracted many middle-class families. Artists, architectural businesses, and small advertising enterprises were attracted by Woodstock's Victorian architecture, its close proximity to Table Mountain, and hotchpotch mixture of residential, retail and warehousing which was markedly different from the bland uniformity of much of suburban Cape Town (ibid.: 33). Woodstock is the home of Greatmore Studios, an appropriate place for an organisation that aims to be multicultural and contribute to the bohemian character of the suburb.[21]

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[19] Erasmus continues: "all identities could be seen/read as culturally hybrid, it should not be difficult to conceive of coloured identities as such, rather than in terms of 'race mixture' or 'miscegenation'. They are cultural formations born from appropriation, disposition and translation in the colonial era" (2001: 16).

[20] Woodstock is divided into "Upper" and "Lower" by Victoria Road, which runs throughout the Southern suburbs of Cape Town.

[21] A poem by Mark Muller boasts of Woodstock's diversity: "Hershel drumming on the corner; Rob Hardy tramping spaced out and possessed, forever; the Muslim children crossing the road with plates of eats on Ramadan evenings; the constant warmth and candelit bonhomie of Don Pedro's; the refreshing lightness and the treats of Frangipanis Deli; the glimpses of creative work through busy windows..." (from "Woodstock Delights", Don Pedro newsletter).

Claiming Victimhood

> *The historical impasse in the late twentieth-century has now assumed the form of a confrontation between new images or emerging identities created by strong psychological and spiritual needs, and older images which are sustained by an equally strong psychological need for psycho-social domination of subordinate by superordinate groups. (N Chabani Manganyi, 1991: 8-9)*

In defying the segregation of apartheid, many have considered interaction to be beneficial, being defined in particular ways that have drawn much from psychology and popular understandings of psychotherapy. Awareness of oneself and others and the idea of the whole self, signifying well-being have taken on new significance since the fall of apartheid. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) has been described as "arguably the greatest milestone *caring* event in this country's recent history" (Reynolds and Richards 2003: 69, my emphasis). The Truth and Reconciliation Commission and its architect and chairperson, Archbishop Desmond Tutu developed a particularly effective language that became embroiled in therapeutic intervention. The TRC has been the subject of much criticism,[22] and I do not intend to consider this in great detail, except to note the rhetorical influence it has had over NGOs and many pastoral enterprises in South Africa. The work of the TRC commenced in December 1995 and was divided into three committees: the Human Rights Violations Committee, the Reparations and Rehabilitation Committee and the Amnesty Committee (Richards 2001: 21). The first committee held fifty hearings around the county between 1996 and 1997. Thousands came to testify about past abuses, and there were live radio broadcasts of these hearings and a weekly hour-long report was televised on Sunday evenings (Gqola 2001: 97). This committee had the highest profile.

The Commission's brief was to "unearth the truth about our dark past, to lay the ghosts of that past so that they will not return to haunt us and that we will thereby contribute to the healing of a traumatised and wounded people, for all of us in South Africa are wounded people and in this manner to promote national unity and reconciliation" (Desmond Tutu, Opening address, Human Rights Violations Commission (HRVC) Hearing, East London, 15th April 1996). It was during the

[22] See James and Vijver (eds.) 2000 and Posel and Simpson (eds.) 2002 for comprehensive surveys of the arguments for and against the TRC.

hearings of the (HRVC), that healing was normalised as the aim of the TRC. Richard Wilson explains that this was possible through laying down a universal redemptive template across individual victims' testimonies (2001: 111). The notion of truth came to be seen as authentic testimony and confession, "sanctioned by Christian discourses on suffering, forgiveness and redemption (ibid.: 110). There was "a progressive structure built into the stages, which began by concentrating on each testimony and then moved from the individual towards the collective and then the nation, and finally returned to the individual in order to facilitate reconciliation and forgiveness" (ibid.: 111). Desmond Tutu and other Commissioners for the TRC drew "together Christian and psychotherapeutic approaches to suffering which sought to transcend individuals' preoccupation with pain" (ibid.), thus attempting to make pain the source of group identity. "Tutu was constructing a new political identity, that of a 'national victim', a new South African self which included the dimensions of suffering and oppression" (ibid.). For Daniel Herwitz, Tutu's influence was to "shepherd the words of victims into an idealized space in which those words are no longer merely those of individual, but words reverberating with the sound of a nation-building exercise before an invisible God" (2003: 16). Confessions were held as revealing national truths, which enabled reconciliation. However, the task of reconciliation often leads to "the denial of responsibility and the assumption that revelation itself is an antidote to the country's problems" (Gqola 2001: 97). Phumla Gqola considers the suitability of the Christian motif of confessions, for confession has its conditions, "implying a relatively recent rupture between the parties concerned. The implied temporary rift lends greater credibility and believability to reconciliation (2001: 98). Moreover, this "harmonising trope was further reinforced by its proximity to 'truth' in the title of the commission" (ibid.).

Calls for reconciliation and restorative justice were woven into the notion of *ubuntu* by the architects of the TRC, which sought to promote the Court's sensitivity to "popular values", through exploiting the idea of a uniquely African form of compassion, or *ubuntu* (Wilson 2001: 11). A further slippage in meaning meant that *ubuntu* was also dressed up as a multicultural unifier, becoming indicative of "the saccharine assertions of rainbow jurisprudence" (Cockrell, quoted in Wilson ibid. 12). This naïve, romantic yet exploitative misuse of an Althusserian style "always-already there" sign (ibid.: 13) directed processes of collective reconciliation through

individual truth-telling and confessions. It is this cathartic role that presented the TRC as having a role in nation-building, but this new national identity for South Africa was based on the feeling of being vulnerable. The image of the damaged nation in need of healing and the subsequent anthropomorphism that inevitably accompanies this image is the psyche of the nation as a self-figure in need of therapeutic guidance.[23] That a whole nation can be considered to be sick/traumatised, assumes the need for a national healing initiative, which would seem to be quite some challenge considering the diversity of socio-political groups in South Africa. How this is possible has come to be conceived in terms of the perceived inclusiveness of Eastern philosophy and the pervasiveness of psychosocial intervention. To label a whole population as traumatised is a means by which to impose psychosocial intervention on to it for the good of not only individuals but, in the case of South Africa, the "new" nation as a whole, that needs to be nurtured and "grown" in its quest for self-affirmation. For despite academic and intellectual criticism, the TRC's moralising and redemptive language and the perception of its inherent benevolence have seemingly opened up a role for advocates of therapeutic intervention and related therapies. New age therapies and workshops have flourished in the suburb of Woodstock; indeed it is one of the most striking characteristics of the area, creating jobs as well as emotional support to the community. Not only are holistic therapies considered to be inclusive, making them popular with liberal whites, but they also deal with the notion of transforming oneself. Perhaps more significant is the accompanying belief that oneself needs healing, which draws directly on the psychosocial intervention model, with its premise that everyone is in need of healing, and which has been confirmed by the TRC.

Don Pedro is a popular restaurant, café and bar in the heart of Woodstock, and is generally considered to be the heart of bohemian culture in Cape Town, where artists, academics and intellectuals gather. The manager started a weekly electronic newsletter that was to cater to the interests of residents living in Woodstock and others who had an affinity to Woodstock in some form or other. As well as informing

[23] "[Claims] that truth commissions can heal a torn nation through a shared truth can be disputed both because the truth is liable to be constructed differently by competing interests and also because nations do not possess collective psyches. Guilt can therefore be ascribed only individually and not collectively. It is doubtful whether a 'traumatised' nation can be cured by having a repressed memory restored. Medical metaphors are misleading when applied to collectivities" (Adam in Alexander 2002: 123 – 4).

residents of crime figures, "stop-crime" meetings, rooms or properties for rent/sale, recommending domestic helpers, the newsletter also advertises numerous courses and workshops. There is a surprisingly large presence of new age material and workshops advertised through it, an example being: "Transformation Through Self-Divination – change doesn't necessarily have to be painful, it can also be a lot of fun! Sue, local artist of Soul Portraits, has taken 4 years to produce a deck of 78 archetypal images to be used as a divination deck for self-knowledge and transformation", while a workshop states that they will be using "our physical imaginations". An example of a lifeskills workshop is titled "Victim to Victor", and states that this "should be the first workshop that any South African ever does. It deals with the victim mindset. No amount of skills training can make any difference if the underlying attitude is negative and disempowered." A number of art workshops unashamedly admit to being inspired by Julia Cameron's *The Artist's Way* (1992), one calling itself "The South African Artist's Way Support Group". Artists, as conceived by Cameron, "belong to an ancient and holy tribe. We are the carriers of truth that spirit moves through us all" (1992: 205). It will be apparent that there is not much difference between my perhaps false categories, for their themes and aims overlap considerably. The focus on creativity is very significant; it is believed that one's soul, while being integral to oneself, has the potential to be transformed, and in so doing, create a feeling of well-being, and self-worth. These advertisements sought an audience in Cape Town that would desire to make sense of the socio-political situation they find themselves in and (regain) a sense of purpose that they feel, and have been told, is missing.

What is particular about this context in Woodstock, Cape Town is that the majority of the users of the electronic newsletter are white, and are using technology that the majority of black Cape Town residents have little or no access to. Secondly, the cost of the courses is beyond the means of the majority of Cape Town's black population. Thirdly, these New Age workshops are drawing on the idea of the universal spirit, which is believed to be more accessible to indigenous peoples of Africa and Asia. Suman Fernando explains that "healing procedures tune into or stimulate capacities for self-healing that are inherent in human beings or in the human condition" (2002: 178). However, it is in Eastern beliefs (both religion and psychology) that this innate human ability is considered to be most able to function; for here "the goal is [...] enlightenment through personal striving and seeking, with emphases on personal,

subjective experience and meditation" (ibid.: 54). Fernando continues that while in the West, the quest is for facts, in the East it is for feeling, moreover, Fernando contends that when Eastern philosophy does reach the West, it is "despiritualised and intellectualised" (ibid.). For Fernando and many others, it is the cultures of Asia and Africa that hold the key to the "unity of humankind" (ibid.: 208). Interestingly, Fernando considers (Western) psychology akin to Buddhism and Hinduism because the development of psychology emerged as "an attempt (in European thinking) to find a solution to Western man's spiritual crisis" (ibid.: 206). Fernando considers Western culture to be empty of spiritual depth, due to its materialist focus, and that this explains the turn to Eastern religion and thought (ibid.: 2 and 206). However, this is to dismiss the impact of the Cartesian worldview which finds much compatibility with the supposed universal spirit in Eastern beliefs (refer to Manganyi above). Eastern and African beliefs have been (mis)used to legitimise intervention, couched in the language of spiritual holism and inclusiveness, but confirming the Western hegemony of and interest in spirituality divorced from material circumstances. This is similar to the justifications of feelings of victimhood, which can be understood as being a form of trauma by association that does not need material connection, but one based on empathy.[24]

When Jenny Cooper began a "transcultural" art therapy for women in Bradford, UK, her starting position was whether a Western approach could be adapted to "the holistic, eastern view of the person who is seen within a family, social and spiritual context" (1999: 87). If a whole society is considered to be in need of healing, therapists have striven to deal with this trauma, in a way that is inclusive. A society as socially, economically and culturally diverse as South Africa, is in need of a particularly inclusive notion of sickness, and Cooper has attempted to theorise such an internationally inclusive notion of sickness, before concluding that art therapy is the most useful medium for realising a transcultural or inclusive approach to healing.

In doing so, Cooper has drawn on David Taylor's three components of sickness as diseases, illnesses and predicaments. Diseases are a physical reality that can be observed and treated. Illness describes or presents the disease, it is an experience and

[24] I am grateful to Alex Argenti-Pillen for alerting me to the fact that empathy is a Western notion (23rd November 2004).

is a social manifestation of the disease, (Taylor 1979: 1009) and the predicament lies within the complex, personal, environmental context of the individual. Predicaments are highly charged with moral and ethical implications (ibid.). In another paper, Taylor explains that hysteria or psychosomatic illness stems from an intolerable predicament from which there is no apparent escape, and the psychic pain is expressed through a sickness without objective evidence (1986: 40). Taylor makes the connection between these three components of sickness and Karl Popper's concept of three worlds. Physical disease belongs to World I, which consists of material bodies and things, World II is a "psychological world of mental states", while World III is a "world of human artefacts such as novels, plays, and enactments, which although abstract are equally real" (Taylor 1986: 38), and it is here that predicaments belong. Cooper considers art therapy, "with its creation of art objects with their symbolic and abstract reality" (1999: 101) to relate to World III " and has the potential to address human predicaments located there" (ibid.). Cooper explains that in "a creative, therapeutic environment, integration can occur between split-off, dissociated parts of the self, or the predicament. Internal shifts in personal beliefs can occur without direct confrontation and reinforcement of defences. Predicaments may not be wholly resolved, but rendered tolerable in a way that is also empowering" (ibid.). This reflects Merleau-Ponty's phenomenological approach that was discussed in chapter 1, for being-in-the-world embraces the materiality of one's body and experiences, seemingly allowing for shifts that are profound but contained within the remit of bodily experience, it is seemingly reaching the subject in its depth. And it is art therapy that is considered to offer a cross-cultural means to do this.

Art therapy as a particularly adept means of reaching out to as many people as possible is also advocated by two professionally trained art therapists working in South Africa. Mamatlakeng Makhoana and Colin Richards explain that this is "because it is directly concerned with the visual image, for art therapy is not as language or culture-specific as purely verbal forms of psychotherapy" (2000). For Makhoana and Richards, art therapy is the most successful means of "fostering psychological well-being, especially in culturally complex situations" (ibid.), such as South Africa. Makhoana and Richards established Mokhele Art Therapy and Education Project in Soweto, 1989. It has established education and peer support programmes for teachers and healthcare workers in Soweto in response to the "many

individuals working with children or adults in the community wishing to include visual arts into their activities" (2000). The two founders write that they share with these workers "a deep appreciation of the power of visual art and also recognise that access to the means of creative expression is a basic human right" (ibid.). Makhoana and Richards differentiate between "therapeutic aspects of the arts in general and more specifically the provision of a professional clinical art therapy service to those communities and individuals identified as most in need" (ibid.). But while the latter is clearly identified with professionalism, the former has come to be extremely popular with various parties interested in conceiving of all art-making as therapeutic. While this view considers art – as therapy – to offer all South Africans the opportunity to come to terms with dis-ease, it ignores material considerations.

While advocates of art therapy consider it to be rooted in material circumstances, what is being privileged in Cape Town is a layperson's interest in traditional Western Anglo-Saxon psychology. Characteristic of this tradition is the innate inner self, which is presented in such a way so as to appear to be universal, giving the impression of inclusive-ness. Bulhan cautions against a psychology in which "positivism and mechanical materialism are juxtaposed with attributes of a race specific proclivity for rhythm, dance, parapsychology and spirituality" (in Seedat, 1997: 267). But this proves to be an uncanny description of the situation in Cape Town, where declarations of holistic healing conform to Western conceptions of the spiritual. The possibility for the realisation and implementation of a truly liberatory psychology (Seedat 1997) is submerged within holistic therapies that are considered to be inclusive and even radical. But this inclusivity is at the cost of material considerations of the influences of history, ideology, socio-economic contexts, culture and language, thus defying the very radical intentions that holistic therapy purports to have. Instead it is a re-assertion of historical Enlightenment humanism, which "went hand in hand with rapacious European imperialism" (Richards 2004: 18).

The particular style of therapeutics that is practised in Cape Town effectively stops the "intellectual and emotional reserves" (Manganyi 1991: 4) of those deploying the therapy initiatives from being challenged on the basis that to do so would be esoteric and Western. This is achieved by the deployment of formalised statements that are deemed to be inherently good, while questioning is considered to be detrimental or

even threatening to the success of the healing potential (Williams and Irving 1999).[25] Conceptualising all South Africans as traumatised has legitimatised intervention on the understanding that it would be inhumane not to intervene. This is the theocracy that guides many South Africans to act. The following section will consider art practitioners in Cape Town and the current manifestation of the "mission position" within the "inclusive" section of its art community, as well as considering means by which artists in Cape Town have resisted the work of the "mission position".

"The Mission Position" and Critical Intervention in Cape Town's Art Community

Effecting or even producing (self) consciousness through material intervention, or upliftment, has been utilized by liberal organisations. In the 1930s it was considered possible to control adolescent sexuality through teaching such skills as knitting, gardening and sewing to young women (Marks 1987: 38). More recently, Deborah Mindry has observed that skills undertaken during the 1990s were "of much the same sort undertaken in colonial and later in apartheid South Africa by women's volunteer organizations: baking, raising chickens, growing vegetables in pocket-sized gardens, candle-making, preserve and jam production, and sewing and handicrafts" (2001: 1204). What is missing from these "microenterprises" where "specialists" "help people to help themselves" is the development of skills that would enable women to seek employment in the formal economic sector (ibid.). This position still characterises much of Cape Town's art community, where (art)-making is considered a means to betterment, whether of the self or others. Making art comes to be a virtuous activity for women, both in terms of making themselves and teaching to others. Despite the emphasis on making, and personal transformation, this does not materialise itself in ways that would transform socio-political positions in South African society. Any radical connotations are submerged within aims which privilege personal and emotional healing, a position which is reflected in empowerment workshops, but also the liberal art environment in Cape Town.

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[25] An example of this is the way that the concept of god is discussed in Julia Cameron's *The Artist's Way* (1992). It is explained that god is shorthand for a creative energy, even a "spiritual electricity" (1992: xii), as such the reader is advised to find a phrase that they feel comfortable with, which is presented as a choice; however it then explained that naming it is irrelevant because the focus is on using the creative energy. Moreover, Cameron writes "it is not the intent of these pages to engage in explaining, debating, or defining that flow. You do not need to understand electricity to use it" (ibid.).

To introduce the particular proliferation and continuation of these themes in the particular context of Cape Town's art community, I hope I will be forgiven for drawing on Don Pedro's newsletter again. One advert is worth quoting in full:

> "CREATIVE" VOLUNTEERS NEEDED
> UBUNTU – without you I do not exist and without me you do not exist. This is an empowerment and upliftment project using art and craft. We are looking for volunteers who can spend 2 hours a month teaching very basic art skills for this worthwhile initiative. You don't need to be artistic or creative or have any particular skill to get involved – just a willingness to make a difference. (Don Pedro Newsletter 21st October 2004)

This advert shows up many issues that have been discussed in this and the previous chapter concerning the assumed benevolent nature of intervention, and it uses what have come to be seen as standard benign phrases with which to articulate intentions. The use of the word *ubuntu* at the start is to catch attention, in its role of evoking a notion of "humanness" (Richards 2004: 18), which, again is automatically considered to be a good thing. When I asked one of my informants Robson to tell me what *ubuntu* meant, his reply was "whatever you want it to mean" (personal communication 14th May 2003). While this is wonderfully honest, it does gloss over the very definite meaning that *ubuntu* does in fact have, which instead is roped to some foggy notion of community and inclusiveness. The vagueness is consolidated by the emotional appeal of the enterprises to be undertaken under its banner, just as what the "difference" in the advert is to be, is not explained but assumed. What is most significant about the advert is its moral agenda, and this, rather than artistic talent or interest, is the basis of the appeal. It is this privileging of emotional empathy that characterises many artistic enterprises in Cape Town, enterprises that have a certain appeal to female desires to be involved. This has derived renewed legitimacy from Desmond Tutu's declaration that all South Africans are victims, for the specific feelings of victimhood felt by many white women act to legitimise intervention into other South Africans' lives. Being vulnerable and dis-eased enables South Africans not only to feel empathy towards others, but also to be victims in their own right and to demand protection from violence, anger and criticism, while simultaneously demanding the right to be making a difference to the "transforming" South Africa.

Woodstock is considered to have a certain edge[26] as well as an appealing architecture and location making it attractive to a bohemian set (see above), who see it as an exciting and even an optimistic place in which to witness the "new" South Africa. It has been called a "grey area" (personal communication with Mthi 14th August, 2002). Grey areas are presented as being "neither officially zoned for white or black residents" (Peffer 2000: 55), but carry the connotation of a new positioning. Although John Peffer concedes that the phrase was being used in South Africa in the 1980s (ibid.), he uses it to conjure up apparently avant-garde possibilities for "real interracial dialogue" (ibid: 56) and art-making (ibid.) (see chapter 3). Brenda Atkinson and Candice Breitz use the notion as the title of an edited collection of essays that seeks to contribute to debate and thus the "transformation at all levels of political and cultural production in South Africa" (Atkinson 1999: 25), "during this unique historical moment" (ibid.). What provoked the project was the publication of an article by Okwui Enwezor (1997, 1999) in which he criticised a number of white South African artists, particularly women for "their desire to 'do it for daddy', to 'find ultimate pleasure in the act of performance and submission' in relation to 'the' white patriarchy" (Atkinson 1999: 19, Enwezor 1999: 396 and hooks 1996a, see also Axel 1998). Enwezor explained in this article that the voicing of white women's desires depends on the erasure of black women's interests, that "not even gender could so suddenly bind together black and white women's bodies as equal partners against patriarchy in post-apartheid-South Africa" (1999: 395). In Cape Town, this desire or belief in the ability for bonding to occur is rendered problematic at best, due to the limited number of black women in the art community.

Currently in Cape Town, the people who have come to dominate art production within this so-called "grey area" are middle-aged and late-middle-aged white women, black male artists and art students and lastly children. It is the dynamics between these three very different socio-political groups and the role of psychosocial intervention in acting as a moral guide for managing the interactions that this thesis is concerned with. "Grey areas" become the site for managing "rituals of interaction" (Nuttall 2000: 4) between these different groups, and draw on the language of the TRC and

[26] Woodstock has a reputation for being a gangster stronghold, partly because PAGAD (People Against Gangsterism and Drugs), a gangster group, was formed in Woodstock in the 1990s, but later moved to the Cape Flats.

accompanying notions of victimhood. This art community or grey area in Cape Town is dominated by the language and practices of psychosocial intervention, advocating "transformations" and "life-journey work" as means to show one's commitment to the "new" South Africa. These terms have been shown to be slogans, empty of substance, and the same is true for "grey areas", which has become "clouded by healing language" (Thembinkosi Goniwe, personal communication, 19th October 2004). The possibility for "grey areas" to fulfil an avant-garde like transformation is little more than rhetorical, for critical engagements within the art community have come to be dominated by virtuous claims to help others, which has rendered the two incompatible.

The prominence of South African female artists has been explained as being a consequence of "a predominantly male chauvinist South African society determined that the study and practice of fine art was an exclusively female pastime" (Skawran 1994: 275). This has come, in part, to be a curious legacy, one in which art-making and education, as a female terrain, has come to be a means for furthering "communication and understanding between both genders and all the peoples of southern Africa" (Skawran 1994: 282). But this assertion is based on the premise that women have the *natural* "capacity to promote understanding and reconciliation" (ibid.: 283), a contentious claim as was made clear in the last chapter. In the same article Skawran notes the many women who have played a leading role in education, art literature, administration, museums and galleries (ibid.: 281). That all the women listed are white is not mentioned; they are merely celebrated as testimony of the power of "sisterhood". These positions enable many white women to practice power while simultaneously feeling "victims of white patriarchy" (Rich in hooks, 2000: 377), which is considered to enable them to empathise with other "victims", who in this case includes not only all women irrespective of colour, but curiously, black men as well. In Cape Town, with the exception of CAP, which has had two black (coloured) directors since the mid 1990s, administrators, trustees, directors have been and continue to be white, and are now also female.[27] The positions what these women fill are ones that create access to Cape Town's art scene, and it is mostly black men

[27] Sue Williamson, Marilyn Martin, Estelle Jacobs, Eunice Gertsteyn, Jill Trappler are among a number of white women who have prominent roles in the Cape Town's artworld.

who have the confidence to approach and engage with these "gatekeepers".[28] It is also important to note that these positions are filled by middle-class women, who are in "search of an escape from leisure" (Barber, quoted in hooks 2000: 383). Moreover, these positions are "proclaimed as the key to liberation" (hooks 2000: 383) by these same privileged women. These positions contribute to and perpetuate inequalities (see Goniwe 2004: 38), for while white dominated institutions have made space for black artists, they have not been transformed in fundamental ways (see Goniwe quoted in Marschall 2000: 116).

The dynamic between these two groups marks a shift from white women empathising with black women to white women happily interacting with *individual* black men. This phenomenon has been considered in The United States by bell hooks, noting, "many white women felt that their status as ladies would be undermined were they to associate with black women. No such stigma was attached to black men" (2000: 379), who were invited, individually, to white social circles (ibid.: 380). In Cape Town, while there were no overt sexual relationships between white women and black men, flirting became a means by which interaction could be initiated. The potential for sexual energy to emerge in interactions amongst different groups is itself managed, not only through the public gaze of the presence of others, but by displacing sexual energy into making art.[29] Turning the exciting and novel experience into a material entity (the artwork), is a means of transforming the risky experience into a respectable enterprise. While sexual desires might be managed or tamed through making, these workshops simultaneously advocate "unleashing energy" (Law 2000: 13), which presents participants in psychosocially influenced workshops with a double bind. What is necessary if meaningful interactions are to occur is a shift away from psychosocial intervention to what I will call critical intervention, which would offer opportunities to voice dissent, and to question and challenge the pervasive appeal of psychosocial intervention.

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[28] The absence of black women artists in Cape Town has recently been discussed in a report on black visual artists in Cape Town: "Black women artists found it difficult in the extreme economic situation to earn a living and have the dual pressure of maintaining a household in a situation where opportunities, skills and self confidence were not high. There was not sufficient support to be found in their communities for young women as arts workers" (Sobopha 2002: 6).

[29] Speaking of the situation in the USA, Derrick Bell mockingly refers to the belief that having a white wife will reconstruct the damaged black male psyche, giving him a sense of "black male wholeness" (1996: 204). This is interesting to consider in relation to the idea of art-making as a healing enterprise.

Blac stands for the Black Artists Collective, which began in 1998, a space for "creative intellectual exploration amongst black artists, journalists and academics" (Minty 2000: 3), before later opening up to selective white artists and intellectuals. Zayd Minty has explained the need for Blac as one of the few spaces where new discourse can be systematically engaged in a popular context, in face of a proliferation of popular catch phrases such as the "Rainbow Nation" and the "Africa Renaissance", which have received "scant intellectualisation" (ibid.).[30] Blac closed in early 2003, with its assets being transferred to a new "conglomerate" (Minty 2003) of CAP and MediaWorks in central Cape Town, which aims to be "a Cultural Zone" (ibid.). Bev Barry, a trustee of CAP and enthusiastic supporter of the merger explained that the original intentions were "for it to be for visual arts, media and graphic design. That it would be very interesting to have it all in one space – where people can access different things. Funders now prefer bigger organisations, a consortium of money and resources. The merger will be a one-stop shop, for training and collaborations" (personal communication, 1st May 2003). Barry also held that artists would be more rounded and versatile having been able to access different resources, that there would be criss-crossing and debate and discussions – capitalising on accessing information informally (ibid.). Opportunities for voicing dissent within this new conglomerate are as yet unknown, but interest in appealing to funders suggests that this might be problematic.

Blac organised a public art initiative for Cape Town, *Returning the Gaze* (2000). It aimed to "prise open a unique and unexplored space in the South African cultural landscape, not by crystallizing whiteness to essence but through exploration and unpacking the nature of power and social relations between Black and Whites from a black perspective" (Sobopha 2001: 56).

> If we can name the organizing frames, the conceptual formulas, the rhetorical devices that disguise and sustain elites, we can begin to develop responses that bring us closer to social justice. That is, we can each begin to stop performing ourselves as dominant as well as better calculate how to return the gaze. (Razack 1998: 16)

[30] Minty told me of the "mission position", which was practised by a number of white artists in Cape Town (personal communication 27th April 2003).

Many of the images used in the festival are repeatedly displayed in various magazines and catalogues, one being a piece by Thembinkosi Goniwe, which deals specifically with the issue of the gaze; "the distant gaze of the white male subject on the one hand and the challenging gaze of the black man also spoke of the ease with which discourses of racial difference are taken for granted and suffered respectively" (Layne 2000: 9). But the effectiveness of images alone to "abduct" is challenged by Goniwe himself: "It is naïve to suggest that visual images can speak for or organise themselves. They need explications that historicize, theorize, and critique them in new (black) contexts. The written word is a crucial factor in the destiny of black South African artists" (2003: 38). However, even opportunities to criticise are by no means simple, for this very criticism was considered to be an opportunity for Goniwe "to vent his anger at being typecast as a token black voice by [the organiser of the catalogue] and what he refers to, very disparagingly, as South Africa's 'liberal white' art establishment" (Klopper 2003: 59). For black artists to extend their artistic practice beyond the production of images to become part of critical exchanges (Goniwe 2003: 38), sits uneasily with white paternalism, which is not threatened so long as inequalities where teaching, research, writing, among others, remain with white art practitioners (ibid.). A further contradiction is exposed by the criticism of anger itself; "labelling the expression of anger an inappropriate act is yet another form of discourse sanitation" (Macedo 1994: 4). This exposes the fallacy of the therapeutic paradigm, for it fears strong emotions (empowerment), which prove to be threatening to existing power relations.

As such, interventions like a recently made film *The Luggage is Still Labelled: Blackness in South African Art* (2003), predominately featuring black artists based in Cape Town speak critically of the dominance of black artists by the white institutions of Michaelis and SANG, but offer little by way of suggesting ways out of the quagmire of white dominance in Cape Town's art community, being unable to "suggest a coherent and comprehensive framework or analysis" (Pissarra 2004: 187). While Greatmore does offer substantial support networks, the denial of critical intervention limits the ability to challenge the hierarchies of power, for like Goniwe, I am of the view that art cannot speak for itself in ways that are truly provocative without the support of opportunities to challenge inequalities on intellectual, material

and practical grounds. As such, while informal support may be possible through the facilities available at institutions such as Greatmore, it would be naïve to dismiss or gloss over the dynamics and motives at play in running them, or dismiss these dynamics as harmless. Albert Memmi has spoken of the liberal colonialist as someone who, while:

> Happen[ing] to dream of tomorrow, a brand new social state in which the colonized cease to be colonized, he certainly does not conceive, on the one hand, of a deep transformation of his own situation and his personality. In that new harmonious state, he will go on being what he is, with his language intact and his cultural traditions dominating. Through a *de facto* contradiction which he either does not see in himself or refuses to see, he hopes to continue being a European by divine right in a country which would no longer be Europe's chattel; but this time by the divine right of love and renewed confidence. (2003: 84)

The liberal colonialist contradiction is no different from that of the many white liberal educators who "proselytise about empowering minorities while refusing to divest from their class-and-whiteness privilege" (Macedo 1998: xxx). Macedo suggests that the real issue for liberals is to understand their privileged position in the process of helping so as not, on the one hand, to turn help into a type of missionary paternalism and, on the other hand, limit the possibilities for the creation of structures that lead to real empowerment (ibid.: xxix). This is the challenge facing many working in the liberal art community in Cape Town, namely to reject the "passivity that confirms [black artists'] participation" (Goniwe 2003: 35) in these very institutions. Goniwe continues that "white art gurus need to come to terms with their attitudes of omnipotence or paranoia in the face of changes that no longer consider their paradigms the future of black art/artists" (ibid.: 38). Artworks by themselves allow inequalities to continue due to the ability of liberals to support (financially, for example) the production of "provocative" artworks, which can lessen feelings of guilt yet does not demand changes in socio-political relations. Marilyn Martin[31] notoriously said during the 1980s that art could speak for itself (personal communication, Joachim 6th May 2003). However, ideological patronage does not constitute material practice or solidarity (Foster 1996: 172). Art speaking for itself does not shift power imbalances, and what will become clear throughout this thesis is

[31] Director of South African National Gallery (SANG).

the many ambiguities felt towards the notion of "dialoguing" over its ability to question the dominant paradigms.

Conclusion

Contemporary pastoral care in Cape Town has utilised creativity as a means to reach the subject in its depth through lifeskills training and holistic therapy; while the former is designated for black (and young) people, the latter is specified for whites, but both are considered to encapsulate empowerment and inclusivity. This is achieved through a therapeutic emphasis on individuation, the resulting self-awareness being considered to enable the realisation of an inclusive community, where difference is marginalised. The importance of recognising creativity to facilitate the development of skills has been couched within a rhetoric of freedom, which has had a particular appeal to women and the role white women have performed in South African society. Making and creativity have been a respectable activity for women, and creativity has close connotations with notions of emancipation, a notion which is associated with bourgeois self-making. While art therapists and black South African psychologists have advocated a materialist position, the expectation of dis-ease for many white South Africans has given them a means to understand themselves and their place in relation to others, which has formed a horizontal trajectory based on idealised notions of suffering as well as difference, which simplify material particularities.

Central to this thesis is an understanding of the contradictory intentions being advocated by individuals interested in helping others achieve their full potential as responsible empathetic individuals. These intentions are both potentially liberatory and repressive. Little disquiet has been voiced amid the therapeutic culture of Cape Town in general, and the liberal art community in particular. Indeed, attempts to "tackle those grey areas between complicity and victimization" (Coombes 2004: 28), which a number of South African artists have sought to do, have been suppressed in Cape Town. To do so requires engagement with the practice of questioning and critical enquiry, which contains the possibilities for challenging socio-political hierarchical relations. The next chapter will discuss creativity and freedom as proposed by Thupelo, where effecting one's self through creative experimentation was held as bringing about self-knowledge and self-freedom. By the end of the

chapter it will be clear how this has been manipulated to serve notions of selfhood as defined by psychosocial intervention.

Chapter 3: Thupelo Workshops: Non-Figuration and Liberation at the Early Workshops

Introduction

The previous two chapters have been concerned with practices and interventions of modernity, which assume a trajectory in which notions of the self and citizenship are universal principles. The last chapter also considered the differences between a material understanding of dis-ease and suffering and a more transcendental understanding that appeals particularly to white South Africans. This chapter will consider the use of Abstract Expressionism by black and white South African artists (particularly since the 1980s), and the historical shifts that have seen the technique move from being conceived as rooted in the particular experience of being a practicing black South African artist to becoming subsumed within a simplistic rhetoric of inclusivity, intuitive mark-making and self-realisation. By the end of the chapter, it will be clear that this shift benefits primarily white artists and art-makers, through privileging the tendency to perceive Abstract Expressionism to be ahistorical and self-referential, yet which can still be presented as advocating freedom of expression. This more recent shift has seen the tendency for white South African artists to re-appropriate liberal humanism as a means to assert their significance in the "new" South Africa.

I will first provide a description of Thupelo and its aims before putting it in the context of the historical struggles by black South African artists to use Western/modernist art techniques in their own work. This will be a condensed description, as John Peffer has undertaken a detailed analysis of these early Thupelo workshops, giving a defence of Abstract Expressionism being practiced by black artists attending the early Thupelo workshops (2002). My own position differs from Peffer's, to the extent that I assume that a defence of black artist's use of Modernist art techniques is not necessary, considering that such an argument would be reductive and regressive (see Araeen 1987). Indeed my criticism over the treatment and reception of abstract art by black artists in Cape Town is precisely that it is still treated as a novelty (see chapter 7). I will then move to considering the various actors involved in establishing Thupelo workshops, focusing on the way that making art at Thupelo was understood as being a form of self-care. Then I hope to explain how understandings of the art being made at Thupelo have been appropriated in particular

ways, making it particularly amenable to the current socio-political context in Cape Town. It will then be possible to look at the particularities of the workshops that now take place in Cape Town in the following chapter.

Thupelo Art Workshops: An Overview

Thupelo Art Project developed out of a need felt by mainly black urban South African artists, to be able to practice art-making in a manner of their own choosing, which was believed to be possible through working with other artists and resisting pressures to conform to the (white) market demand for Township Art, a novel form of social realism. This was in direct opposition to the Nationalist Government's implementation of the Bantustan concept of separate homelands for different ethnic groups. The main aim of Thupelo was that of adopting a non-racial character toward art-making, with a measure of affirmative action towards artists disadvantaged by apartheid. Officially, Thupelo arose out of three Community Art Organisations (CAOs) that were formed during the so-called "struggle years" of the 1970s and 1980s in Johannesburg: Funda, Fuba and Johannesburg Art Foundation (JAF), which were teaching art in non-formal institutions in Johannesburg and its surrounding townships. Bill Ainslie (a liberal white artist) founded JAF and was also involved in setting up both Funda and Fuba, and his personal influence as co-founder of Thupelo will be considered in detail below. David Koloane was the other founder, a black artist and close friend of Ainslie having been taught by Ainslie at JAF (1974 – 1977). Koloane was convinced of the need for interaction among South African artists: "it was difficult at that time for artists to move from one point to another because of the Group Areas Act. We hardly knew one another because of these restrictions. I felt that the workshop concept would, in a way, alleviate this problem. If we all came together for two weeks and if we got funding, we could bring in artists from all over the country and discuss common problems" (1995: 265).

As was described in the introduction, Thupelo workshops were modelled on Triangle workshops held in upstate New York. These Triangle workshops were focused around the desires and interests that the sculptor Anthony Caro had in American abstract art. Caro credits American abstract artists with offering him the catalyst for change in his own work: "America made me see that there are no barriers and no regulations. Americans simply aren't bound to tradition or conventional solutions in

their art or anything else" (Caro, quoted in Carandente, 1999: 28). Caro was very influenced by Clement Greenberg, who has been declared the "designer and subtle manipulator of modernism, which is the single most important and influential theory of modern art" (Kuspit 1979: 3). Greenberg was a positivist who believed "in a non-institutionally mediated 'pure' experience that is non-projective (only passively receptive) and that is a non-subjective as well as pre-cognitive intuition of the innate properties of independent objects" (Craven 1994: 6). Speaking of New York's abstract art of the 1930s to 1950s, Greenberg said "the eye has trouble locating central emphases and is more directly compelled to treat the whole of the surface as a single undifferentiated field of interest, and this in turn, compels us to feel and judge the picture more immediately in terms of its over-all unity" (Greenberg 1961: 137). Greenberg held that art cannot be reduced to anything not itself (Shapiro and Shapiro 1985: 138), that analysis should be restricted to "the supposedly self-evident givenness of brute phenomena" (Craven 1994: 4). Greenberg felt that the avant-garde should be radically different from anything that had existed before in American art – can also be interpreted as a way of escaping from constraint (Greenberg 1961: 139), which is to make it ahistorical and self-referential. Greenberg was a frequent visitor/critic at the early Triangle workshops and had visited South Africa in 1975 (Elliott 1990: 92). Greenberg wanted his criticism to have "sublime credibility" (Kuspit 1979: 6); "the best taste [the concern of the critic], like the best art, seems to transcend history – neither one really waits for history's judgment – because they are completely objective" (ibid.: 145). It is also worth noting that Greenberg's first major essay, "Avant-Garde and Kitsch" (1961) was important in establishing the modern currency of the idea of the avant-garde (Wood 1999: 11) (see below).

David Koloane first attended in 1983 and again in 1984, while Bill Ainslie attended in 1985 before the inaugural Thupelo workshop. Ainslie declared that "the workshop provided a compressed learning experience that seems to me very important for transmitting those intangibles that make significant and ambitious work possible, particularly for those from far flung places. The good work that emerged provided the central lesson" (Triangle Yearbook 1985). Koloane did not consider himself to be influenced by Greenberg, instead considering the workshop model to have "socio-political implications" (Peffer 2002: 123), based on the experience he describes below:

> The Triangle Workshop has been for me the greatest revelation in my creative development, [...] I felt intimidated by the energy and output of work, and the stimulating spirit in which it was done. It is paradoxical to say this fear freed me of my insecurity. It made me bold enough to tackle and challenge canvas measuring 8 feet by 4 feet without the least idea of how I was to go about it. The very fact that I completed this 'outsize' work in two days and also painted two smaller paintings not only amazed me, but the technical quality and the free spirit of expression made me realize how important it is for artists to share and exchange freely ideas, weaknesses and accomplishments [...] (Koloane, personal statement, Triangle brochure 1983)

Despite missing the first nine days of the workshop, due to the difficulty of obtaining a passport in South Africa, Koloane still had a profound experience at Triangle, and one which he believed would be of huge significance in South Africa, with the restrictions of space and interaction. Koloane and Ainslie used their experiences at Triangle to initiate Thupelo, with the first Thupelo workshop taking place outside Johannesburg in 1985, during a time of intense civil strife. The workshop brought 15 artists and art teachers together from Community Art Organisations, including Community Arts Project (CAP) (see previous chapter), aiming to enable teachers to pass on what was learned at the workshop to their respective community organisations. The idea of Thupelo was that through participation in an environment conducive to "creative freedom", artists were able to equip themselves and their own students with the capabilities to move beyond the constraints that "hindered [artistic] development" (unpublished Annual Report 1989 – 1990). At the early workshops a guest artist from Triangle attended, while the United States – South Africa Leadership Exchange Programme (USSALEP)[1] sponsored the first two workshops and half of the third. The significance of a "potent creativity" coming into being through interaction with other artists was appealing to many South African artists. The resonance of this in South Africa was also about defying apartheid's restrictions. To make this art was to defy the proscriptions of apartheid, with its demand for spatial segregation, because black, white and coloured artists were coming together and working in a shared space.

This interaction meant that the project was breaking the Cultural Boycott, which had gained the endorsement of the UN in 1980; requesting that "all states and organisations suspend cultural, educational, sports and other exchanges with the racist

[1] Bill Ainslie was involved in setting up this organisation.

regime" (quoted in Campschreur and Divendal 1989: 175). A consequence of the boycott was that artists were "denied exposure to other cultures and other creative people as well as opportunities to work outside the country" (Martin 2001: 37), a later more selective approach to the boycott allowed artists to travel and work abroad if they consulted with the National Liberation Movement beforehand. Koloane has told me that Thupelo did cooperate with this, through emphasising that the workshops were educational (personal communication, 30th November 2000) while also maintaining their alignment with the struggle. It was a refusal to remain segregated, which formed the basis for this alignment, the refusal to live and work in segregated environments as decreed by apartheid. Thupelo workshops were concerned to be about "personal searches for a specific language with which to express inner longings, whilst addressing social issues as well" (Ntuli 1993: 74), being outside of party politics yet engaging in searches for liberation through experimenting with different techniques. Because freedom of association was oppressed under apartheid, to proclaim one's individuality was to address social issues.

Under the leadership of Bill Ainslie, JAF taught Abstract Expressionism, believing it to be the only non-racial art; claiming itself to be "non-institutional" (Trappler 2000: 25), and allowing for the facilitating of "freedom of expression and discovery, allow[ing] individuals to experiment and take risks" (ibid.). And it was Abstract Expressionism that came to be very influential at the Thupelo Workshops, where it was perceived as a means to an end, a form of creativity that could act as a facilitator for achieving self-determinism as an artist. Abstract Expressionism was considered to be extremely compatible with working on a large scale: "our objective was to allow artists to work in a different scale and to experiment" (personal communication with Koloane, 6th May 2003), as well as being conceived as a means by which artists could experiment. Experimenting with such techniques became a means by which artists could tap into or gain access to other creative ideas and pick up new skills (personal communication with Koloane, 30th November 2000). Privileging the act of making (Oliphant 1995: 260) over finished works has been characteristic of Thupelo, finding itself to be compatible with Abstract Expressionism and also acrylic paints (Littlefield

Kasfir 1999: 88).[2] The significance of privileging the process of making art at Thupelo meant that artists were "able to confront materials rather than follow a formula which they had been doing over the years, not thinking how this should be done, just reproducing a stereotype and using the same old materials without exploring other media like collage or paint or metal or found objects" (Koloane 1995: 265). In South Africa this appeal of process, or act of creativity came to be appropriated as a tool in projects of self-making and empowerment through the physical process of producing the artwork. What was produced came to be understood as an intricate expression of, or indeed a part of oneself; a means to externalise oneself, while the possibility to do so came from interaction with others.

Koloane has always maintained that Thupelo was and should remain anti-academic, that it should remain bound to literal interpretation of its name, "learning by example".[3] Koloane explained that this meant learning, "not by academic textbooks and theories, but through how other artists solved problems" (personal communication 5 May 2003). Having experienced participating at Triangle (see below) while completing a Masters degree at London University, Koloane wrote: "In assimilating this integrated experience I realised that teaching in a workshop was often more rewarding than an academic approach. The former has to do with the experience of making things while the latter with the principles of how to do things" (1990b: 84). This is also to privilege spontaneity, a notion that Koloane has used to describe the assimilation of abstract techniques possible at the workshops (personal communication 30th November 2000). Koloane has frequently asserted that discussions at the early workshops were only about technique and showing slides; to produce work was the main objective, along with finding solutions to technical issues (Koloane, personal communication, 6 May 2003). Supporting this, Ricky Burnett has described Thupelo workshops as:

> [...] cost effective, intense and above all available to the mature practising artist, essentially offer[ing] an educative experience. Their non-academic, fluid, interactive and hands-on character may well offer clues for future cultural projects. There are clues here for revisioning. (1995: 11)

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[2] Golden Paint, makers of acrylic paint, came to have a significant presence at the workshops, after Bill Ainslie enabled Golden Paint to have a market in South Africa.

[3] Koloane has written extensively about the early Thupelo workshops and its impact from a personal perspective (1990b, 1995, 1997, 1999, 2000a, 2000b).

While this description is very practical, like Koloane's own description of the early workshops, there has been a tendency to link these notions of non-academia, tactility and spontaneity to something that is particularly African, and the belief in spontaneous art-making as "African". Thupelo has thus been described as combining European and African influences, making it susceptible to identification as a "Grey Area" (Peffer 2002: 54). As described in chapter 2, this notion alludes to the avant-garde, and is used to describe the multiracial, or non-racial characteristic of Thupelo, the special dynamic at play in such an environment, and the exciting art that results from this interaction across racial boundaries (ibid.: 56). This mixing has also been described as forming a "synergy" (ibid.: 57), which alludes to the eclectic forms of new ideas that result from such interactions (and will be considered in more detail in the following chapter). The privileging of Thupelo as African has been emphasised at various points in Thupelo's history, and more recently (as we shall see next chapter) as a defence of the special characteristics of the workshops in Cape Town, the most significant being that intellectualism is not African (see Law 2000b) and therefore is not to have a role in Thupelo if it is to be inclusive (see following chapter). Yet as we shall see, there is a strange mixing of influences at these later workshops, as this idea of non-intellectualism as typically African, is combined with a wish to privilege the individual as a universal entity. This has had the perverse consequence of enabling white South Africans who are involved in Thupelo to retain significant cultural hegemony, particularly as whiteness, Westernisation and internationalism are conflated even as the same hegemonic position calls for Thupelo to have characteristics that are considered to be African, creating a new demand for the idea of "grey areas".

This will be considered in more detail below and the following chapter, but is worth considering the experience of making at Thupelo (without such emotional and romantic longings) as was apparent during the space restrictive apartheid regime. Colin Richards has described Thupelo in the following way:

> Given the restrictions of freedom of association, of movement, of habitation, given also the pressures exerted by the demands of political struggle, the Thupelo workshop focused on important aspects of the human dimensions of process. Amongst these we must count the sensual, existential, site-specific

> experience of freedom. Specifically the freedom of association, movement, collectivity of sensual embodiment of space both social and personal. (2000: 86).

The physical, practical experience of freedom at Thupelo had a profound impact on many of the black artists who attended it (see below). This is evocative of the interest phenomenology has with examining the nature of manifestation and disclosure, to the particular nature of the human encounter with the world. The physical experience of working with objects, alongside other people, such as at Thupelo, is one of "human-being-in-the-world" (Moran 2002: 22). Indeed as Koloane has written, "the workshop presented the environment to the artists, so they started looking around and seeing what they could use from the environment, which they had never done before. [...] Some artists discovered for the first time that they could actually put things together and construct, rather than just paint or just draw" (1995: 265). This is to draw out the experience of objectivity as it emerges at the heart of subjectivity (Moran 2002: 2), to "focus on the specific conditions of human embeddedness in an environment, and to make visible the phenomenon of the environment" (ibid.: 5). This practical, material emphasis is peculiar to the early workshops; later the *sensuous* experience is marginalized in favour of a universalising *spiritual* inclusiveness.

Black Urban Expression: Interpretations and Reactions

There is recognition that art from Thupelo "may well owe a great deal to modernist painterly concerns" (Burnett 1995: 8), which been a provocative opposition to widespread opinions that such art is not what black artists should be making. David Koloane explains: "it is only black artists – who constitute the indigenous population – who are insistently reminded at every possible occasion about their own identity. [...] The expectation does not appear to apply to white artists" (1999: 333). This is to hold a view of "the world as a more open landscape, a single network (or to suggest its diversity, a 'network of networks') through which culture flows" (Hannerz 1997: 164). The adoption of modernist approaches by black South African artists is also "in very significant ways, a political assertion" (Powell 1995: 18). This is possible when the "peoples of the third world actually work *inside* the framework of modernism, [...] participating in the mythologies, the whole exercise becomes self-deconstructive. It no longer serves to underline and establish difference. Instead it becomes, or at least can become, a space in which shared identities are worked through, and

experience is reclaimed from the residual discourses of the west" (ibid.: 20 - 21). To openly have some "allegiance to or some debt to 'European' influence[s]" (Burnett 1995: 8) is not conceived as simply an acculturation process, but is to "claim a common and identical humanity" (Powell 1995: 19).

Sophiatown is emblematic of what was felt to be so important about Thupelo.[4] Paul Gready has described Sophiatown as "a pressure cooker of societal potential and contradictions, and provided a 'moment' in which a collective dream of a black urban culture that might have been" (2002: 144).[5] This Johannesburg district has been remembered as "a race-class nexus" (Gready 2002: 145) and a hub of cultural activity during the 1950s. Hannerz has described the processes of creolization that took place in Sophiatown, through connections that it had with the outside world (1997: 168), ancestral gods, Western philosophy, and the jazz of black America "within one's field of existence" (ibid: 167). This was to defy the proscriptions of apartheid, and the problematic position of many of the black middle-class writers, musicians and artists who resided in Sophiatown, of wanting to participate and access white culture but was experienced as a double edged sword.

> I was encouraged [...] to develop and cultivate an appreciation of my own culture of the shield and the assegai, of ancestral gods, drums, mud huts and half-naked women [...] But I am a freak, I do presume an appreciation for Western music, art, drama and philosophy; I can rationalise as well as they; and using their own system of assumption, I presume myself civilized and then set about to prove it by writing a book with the title, *Blame me on History.*
>
> (Bloke Modisane, quoted in Hannerz 1997: 167)

Sophiatown's clearance under a Native Resettlement Bill (1954) destroyed a growing black middle class of writers and artists, which is noted with much regret by David Koloane and Ivor Powell (see Koloane and Powell 1995: 264). Sophiatown defied the segregation policies of apartheid by creating opportunities and spaces for different artists to come together, and thus the potential for "creative freedom". Powell notes that the artist Gerard Sekoto, a resident of Sophiatown "makes a point of finding the technology, the culture that is shared with whites" (ibid.). While there is a series of

[4] A speculator called Tobiansky acquired land, 237 acres, four miles west of the centre of Johannesburg, just before the turn of the century, naming it after his daughter Sophia, and started to sell plots to whoever would buy, whether white or black (Hannerz 1997: 165). But after the 1923 Urban Areas Act, it was one of the few places where black and coloured people could own land and houses and be so close to the centre of Johannesburg.

[5] Note that Thupelo has also been described as a "pressure cooker".

portraits by George Pemba, depicting professors, doctors, eminent members of society.[6] There is a "strong sense in this body of work of a tradition beginning to emerge of black artists working in the same way as whites. They are also celebrating the attainment and aspiration of township dwellers in a way that later artists don't. In short, they are being artists, not *black* artists" (ibid. original emphasis). Koloane mourned the loss of this middle-class and intelligentsia, perhaps above all, for its disinterest in ethnic identities. The fluidity and the privileging of artists with no prefix associated with Sophiatown was what Ainslie and Koloane hoped to revive through JAF and Thupelo.

The label, Township Art, was coined in reference to the movement that blossomed in the black Townships of Johannesburg during the 1960s, following artists such as Sekoto. And while initially referring to specifically to social realism made by black artists, it has come to encompass any art made by black South Africans (for an example of this appropriation, see Gavin Younge 1988). In attempts to make this work understandable, or rather knowable and thus not threatening, white art patrons and educators (including teachers from Polly Street, see previous chapter) have called Township Art "the new humanism" (Berman 1993: 251) due to the centrality of the "human situation" (ibid.), depicted in the paintings, and "testifying to the spiritual resilience of its makers" (ibid: 285). This is to individualise the artists and their work, to remove the threat of collective action in the new black urban centres, with their new proximity to whites. The paintings were interpreted as being material evidence of mourning for a lost *communal* way of life, as black people came to terms with living in (individuated) urban areas. Psychiatrists and psychologists in colonial Africa expressed these fears in terms of the so-called deculturation thesis (Dubow 1996: 15).

Sekoto's work has been described as scenes of "African life", and "living essays on a people who are slowly and painfully discovering themselves and who they are amidst the most adverse conditions" (Couzens 1985: 251). These works, made in District Six and Sophiatown, have been conceived as offering a means of understanding and relating to the pain of the urban black condition and predicament. Yet it is precisely

[6] Sekoto (1913 – 1993) and Pemba (1912 –) have been named "pioneers" (Couzens 1985: 253) after their role as two of the first professional black artists working in urban South Africa. Working in urban centres gave them "access to new materials and processes and to a new language of art-making" (Sack 1988: 11).

these localities that are praised by David Koloane and Ivor Powell for their internationally and intellectually engaged residents. Sekoto's work is described as depicting the "middle class of intellectuals and leaders of society" (Powell 1995: 15), but it has been (and continues to be) more appealing to white patrons and art enthusiasts to see township art as "authentic" black expression (Nolte 1996: 34), depicting "images of pathos and sadness" (Powell 1995: 14), even being described as depicting "man's existential loneliness" (Verstraete 1989: 159). This is to conceive of the artist as an emotionally individuated self. While these artists may have been grappling with a new consciousness and sense of self (see Koloane 1989: 212), the romanticised interpretations and subsequent demands of the (white) art-market forced artists to remain in "an infantile mode" according to Koloane (1995: 262), who believes many teachers were doing what the government wanted: "to remain in that childish and self-taught state which does not even have the possibility of future growth. They wanted to encourage the crude and naïve expression so that they could justify the apartheid policies" (2000: 14). Ivor Powell has written a description of Township Art that is worth quoting at length:

> Looked at in the broadest view, township art reproduces, so seemingly systematically, the basic assumptions that whites wanted to nurture around their compatriots. [...] thus the absence of technology and of progress; thus the emphasis on subjects like music and dancing as rendering blacks as creatures of *feeling rather than thought*; thus the overwhelming picture of the township dweller as being helpless, in need of the guidance of whites, And so on. And so on. (Powell 1995: 16, my emphasis)

What were supposedly truthful insights into the lives of Africans was more often than not part of a sustained fiction, but one that was eagerly bought by white patrons. Thupelo was started as a rebuttal to this "so-called Township Art, a sentimental expression which has imprisoned many artists in a sterile and repetitive cycle. 'There is nothing more awful in the world than repetition and uniformity. Uniformity is the apotheosis of banality'" (Koloane 1990b: 84, quoting Bowlt 1988). This desire for the new, and to not be pigeonholed as artists (personal communication, Loder 4th February 2004) was what motivated Thupelo. Yet, such therapeutic interpretations as described above, have been revitalised as a means of conceiving of involvement and adaptation to the "new" South Africa. To make art that is "child-like" has come to be an ideal that seemingly draws on the myth of modernism. But what will be discussed

first is the very specific use of this myth at the early Thupelo workshops, where discovery of the self was considered to be possible through the manipulation of materials.

Accessing the Myths of Modernism: Narratives From the Early Workshops

Modernism concerns the belief in the practice of art of enabling a person to change oneself through art, and in so doing achieve freedom from various constraints. Rosalind Krauss describes modernist avant-garde originality as being "conceived as a literal origin, a beginning from ground zero, a birth. Marinetti, thrown from his automobile one evening in 1909 into a factory ditch filled with water, emerges as if from amniotic fluids to be born – without ancestors – a futurist" (1997: 157). This evokes an attachment to a notion of universal relevance, and specifically, of answering a kind of primordial need, a need that all humans have a right to practice, experience and experiment with, and it is to practice this right that artists attended Thupelo. This moral right or need can be conceived as the Kantian aesthetic sublime, which has the capacity to *humanize* (Crowther 1989: 174). The sublime is an item or set of items which, through the possession or suggestion of perceptually, imaginatively, or emotionally overwhelming properties, succeeds in rendering the scope of some human capacity vivid to the senses (ibid.: 162). This is to root the sublime in materiality.

Modernist art is commonly associated with the avant-garde, with "forging ahead, breaking down barriers, caring nothing for expectation, being innovative, challenging convention, and so on" (Wood 1999: 7). The positive attributes of the avant-garde are such that "in our general speech, and the speech of newspapers and television, 'avant-garde' has come to represent an expansive category" (ibid.). Yet, as Paul Wood explains, "in some quarters, avant-gardism has come to be seen as an ideology of the status quo rather than a challenge to it. Attention has turned to what an avant-garde covered up rather than what it opened up" (ibid.: 10). Yve-Alain Bois and Rosalind Krauss "redeal modernism's cards" (Bois 1997: 21), shifting modernist production from its place of origin, "to shake it up" (ibid.: 40). The mainstream or modernist interpretation of modern art takes part above all in an ontological project; for once art was liberated from the constraints of representation, it had to justify its existence as the search for its own essence (Bois 1997: 25). The first postulate is that visual art,

especially painting, addresses itself uniquely to the sense of sight. The second concerns the 'tactile' that art history addresses, "being only the visual representation of tactility: matter does not exist for it except as in-formed, made over into form" (ibid.). The third concerns the privileging of the vertical over the horizontal in visual art, for art is addressed to the subject as an erect being, far from the horizontal axis that governs the life of animals (ibid.). Krauss further explains that the vertical is "a pledge, a promise, a momentum, a narrative. To stand upright is to attain to a peculiar form of vision: the optical; and to gain this vision is to sublimate, to raise up, to purify" (2000: 363). The fourth postulate is that modernist ontology requires an artwork to have a beginning, a middle and an end, and holds that all apparent disorder is necessarily reabsorbed in the very fact of being bounded (Bois 1997: 26). This requires an indifference to the subject (ibid.: 15), a rootlessness that refers to nothing outside of its borders.

Barnett Newman, an abstract artist working in New York in the 1950s, wrote about the sublime in abstract art being made there, declaring that:

> We are creating images whose reality is self-evident and which are devoid of the props and crutches that evoke associations with outmoded images [...] We are freeing ourselves of the impediments of memory, association, nostalgia, legend, myth, or what have you [...] Instead of making *cathedrals* out of Christ, man, or "life", we are making them out of ourselves, out of our own feelings. The image we produce is the self-evident one of revelation, real and concrete, that can be understood by anyone who will look at it without the nostalgic glasses of history. (1990: 173, italics, original)

Nochlin describes a "transformation of the Realist concept of truth or honesty, meaning truth and honesty to one's perception of the external physical or social world, to mean truth or honesty either to the nature of the material – i.e. to the nature of the flat surface – and/or to the demands of one's inner 'subjective' feelings or imagination rather than to some external reality" (Nochlin 1971: 236). Abstract artists can be understood as "reasserting man's natural desire for the exalted" or the sublime through "our own feelings" (Newman 1990: 173), and this notion is discernable in the early workshops; sublimation was perceived to realise itself through the material act of making. However, in more recent years, material particularities have been marginalized as the drive of "sublimation moves the paintings steadily

away from the material, the tactile, the objective" (Krauss 2000: 364). This drive has created distance between the current Cape Town workshops and the workshops that took place in Johannesburg in the 1980s. In the early Thupelo workshops transformation was premised on a material experience; it was a "confrontation with materials" (Koloane 1995: 265) that provoked transformations to occur. This shift in the conceiving of sublimation is, while subtle, very significant, and will become apparent through the course of this and the next chapter.

The early Thupelo workshops were understood to be a facility rather than a movement (Koloane 1995: 265), with art-making as a means to an end, not about initiating or creating an art movement. The means to an end or process that is evoked was centred on notions of individualism and the re-making of the self. They did not aim to construct a new South African identity, but to privilege the use of abstraction as a means to care for oneself, to explore the self, free from constraints imposed by others. As has been mentioned above, the ability to make oneself anew was deemed to be possible through modernist art techniques. Krauss further explains that the "self as origin is the way an absolute distinction can be made between a present experienced *de novo* and a tradition-laden past" (1997: 157). Access to this modernist myth of originality (ibid.: 170) is premised on the ability to make art using Western techniques and modernist form. The myth concerns the erasure of history; it is the idiom within which we can return to our "true selves", for by erasing history it is possible to be born afresh. This avoids the awful entanglement of the past, even enabling a general amnesia in which a new self can emerge. In South Africa, abstract art meant the erasing of specific schools of art, for abstraction would create a space for creativity that was not burdened with the past (and its ethnic identities), and categories of white settler art or black/township art would become redundant.[7]

Albie Sachs presented a paper at an ANC in-house seminar on culture in Stockholm, 1989, in which he made the controversial suggestion that members of the ANC should be banned from saying that culture is a weapon of the struggle (1990: 10). He then went on to say that "it results from an impoverishment of our art. Instead of getting real criticism, we get solidarity criticism. Our artists are not pushed to improve the

[7] This is similar to the adoption of English as the language of resistance, and thus, also freedom, for it had no ethnic associations (see Alexander and Heugh 2001).

quality of their work, it is enough to be politically correct [...] Ambiguity and contradiction are completely shut out" (Ibid.). For Sachs, the music of Hugh Masekela and Abdullah Ibrahim is an example of art that "bypasses, overwhelms, ignores apartheid and establishes its own space" (ibid.: 11). This music "conveys genuine confidence because it springs from inside the personality and experience of each of them, [...] we respond to it because it tells us something lovely and vivacious about ourselves, not because the lyrics are about how to blow up a petrol pump" (ibid.). Sachs further spoke of culture not being separate from the general struggle: "culture is us, it is who we are, how we see ourselves and the vision we have of the world. In the course of participating in the culture of liberation, we constantly re-make ourselves" (ibid.). This is to assert the individual and the sublime. However, I want to suggest that what the early Thupelo artists were doing was ambiguous and contradictory, but moreover, by this very fact, also political, for it defied the state sanctioned segregation. Coming together and making art that *felt* universal, was very much a political act, albeit a subtle and sophisticated one in the environment in which they were working; namely one that "denied any common humanity, and insisted that people be compartmentalised into groups forcibly kept apart" (Sachs 1990: 13). Thus, to assert one's individuality in face of apartheid's attempts at erasing this was a political act. Sachs concludes by quoting a war poem from Mozambique: "it is not enough that our cause be pure and just; justice and purity must exist inside ourselves" (ibid.: 15). A means of doing this was to assert one's subjectivity, one's selfhood, indeed, to care for oneself in a manner similar to that proposed by Michel Foucault.

While Foucault's later work was specifically concerned with writing as a means of making the self, his interest in a "genealogy of how the self constituted itself as a subject" (Martin et al 1988: 4) does have much pertinence for the aims of Thupelo. In a seminar at Vermont University,[8] Foucault "began an investigation of those practices whereby individuals, by their own means or with the help of others, acted on their own bodies, souls, thoughts, conduct, and way of being in order to transform themselves and attain a certain state of perfection or happiness, or to become a sage or immortal or so on" (ibid.). Privileging and recognising the process of becoming a subject in contrast to being an ethnic category was considered by (some) South

[8] The seminars are collated in Martin, Gutman and Hutton (eds.) 1988.

African artists to be realisable through Abstract Expressionism. David Koloane has been called "an African modernist" (Powell 1995: 23), while Ricky Burnett has criticised the exclusivity of modernism: "by locating modernism as an exclusively western strategy [... McEvilley] is denying 'non-western' intelligence access to its possibilities [...] In effect, if you are black, modernism, as a strategy for discovering one's own true selfhood or authentic representation, is discounted" (1995: 9). What the early Thupelo artists were doing was using modernism as a means to care for the self, while the relationship between the art-maker and the art being made was often conceived as one of entwinement.

Koloane and others associated with the early workshops wanted to champion the idea of self-determinism as artists, and that this could be achieved through painting in a manner that suited how one *wanted* to paint. These are concerns for obtaining self-determinism and empowerment, about (re)claiming the confidence to declare (as Koloane once did), that "painting is the one thing that I can do as I like" (personal communication with John Picton, August 2000).[9] The notion of the free self was priceless in defying demands imposed by the art-markets, Ivor Powell has described Koloane's work as depicting "primal chaos" (1995: 23), which alludes to the belief in art as a primordial concept (Krauss 1997: 158). By enabling the development of skills, Thupelo facilitated artists' outgrowing of their limitations (Koloane personal communication 30th November 2000), which was also a means to regeneration (Krauss 1997: 157). Koloane's understanding of the abstract work that he made at Thupelo and how it related to his understanding of "self" was described to Pitika Ntuli as a search for "anonymity in an ocularcentric situation [apartheid]" (1993: 75). In his work, Koloane sought to abstract in order to remain meaningful to himself, arguing that by abstracting one's identity, one retains it (ibid.). This search for ways to preserve the self, to remain true to oneself continues to be a kind of self-imposed aim of artists attending the workshops. This draws on Paulo Freire's belief: "freedom is not an ideal located outside of man; nor is it an idea which becomes myth. It is rather the indispensable condition for the quest for human completion" (2004: 47).

[9] Note the similarities with Steve Biko's column entitled "I write what I like", which featured regularly in the SASO Newsletter (1970s), written under the pseudonym of Frank Talk.

But for many participants at these workshops, Thupelo was understood to be liberating through drawing on a Western art tradition, using Abstract Expressionism to meet very particular needs. Lionel Davis, a workshop veteran noted the irony of this when he spoke of his own art education at the launch of the Western Cape's Visual Arts Network of South Africa (27th March 2002). Lionel explained that he started his education at CAP where he was taught techniques such as perspective, then went to Rorke's Drift and then onto Michaelis; at all of these he was taught by people who taught from a Western perspective. Davis explains that at these institutions "they taught us to be effigies of them" (ibid.). Thupelo was the first time that he made abstract work – where he was able "to be myself". The success of Thupelo was through allowing the voices of black people to speak for themselves, and where artists were able to become successful through combining what they had learned at Thupelo and Missionary Schools. Lionel continues:

> After the Second World War there was a move away from realism, which was associated with Russia – which was a backlash from the American school. Institutions frowned upon the fact that blacks were going to Thupelo and doing Abstract Expressionism – who were moving away from realism. They had put us in a box. The blacks were moving away from drawing and linocuts, "township art", but this process was called American imperialism. They were not letting us decide what we wanted to do, it was a patronising attitude, as if you didn't know what was good for you. I had been a slave to the rules of art making, when I got to abstract art-making, I could turn most of those art rules overboard. A freedom that I had never experienced before – it freed me from the feeling that I couldn't paint. Freedom to express myself without feeling that I had to conform to principles. I was free, I could use found materials, and worked from my guts – it was a liberating experience. (personal communication, 27 March 2002)

Other artists also speak of the opportunity to become a successful artist through the combined experiences of the Thupelo workshops with the education offered by Rorke's Drift and other missionary schools. Describing his experience at Rorke's Drift, Kay Hassan explained that he "didn't know how to look. They taught me how to look, they taught me how to handle a pencil, because with a single pencil you could get different kinds of tonal values and textures" (2000: 12). While this was very important, it was also necessary to be able to break the rules of painting and introduce new and different techniques (ibid.: 15), as a means to cope with the limited access to proper art materials in the townships. Hassan realised that there was so much material

in his environment (ibid.: 14), which was then consolidated at Thupelo. Here "we thought the best way to do art was to experiment, play around, and try things you had never done before and also build up your confidence and also to work with different artists and not to be scared that someone will steal your technique" (ibid.: 15).

Garth Erasmus, who has lived in Cape Town since the 1980s, is a veteran of the early workshops in Johannesburg, which he describes as militant (personal communication 2nd April 2003). For Thupelo was concerned with bringing black and other disadvantaged artists together (ibid.), to combat isolation and discrimination. Erasmus explains that "the original intentions were to forego all that you normally did – to basically fly. Experimenting was something you wouldn't normally have the privilege to work with [...] The other vital thing was to let people know each other, this was the impetus. Friendships were formed and staying in touch was very important – building a fellowship of artists" (ibid.). Elsewhere Erasmus has explained that Thupelo liberated him – not from responsibilities to society, but by opening up unlimited possibilities of expression (Martin 1990: 31). Ainslie wrote "one thing that fascinates me is the importance of mark making. The frankness of one's relation to the means" (Ainslie 2000: 26). This relates to Richards' interpretation of the sensuous characteristic of Thupelo (2000), as a means through which artists were seemingly able to discover unlimited possibilities. However, while this is commonly associated with abstraction, it is by no means exclusively so: Erasmus explains "There I was, supposedly a black artist, doing pictures that had a very volatile content, like riot scenes. Painting them conventionally, they weren't projecting. But with the spray! The spray burned right into the cardboard, like a photograph – the very medium itself was volatile. When I held the can and touched the nozzle, the paint seemed to flow right up my arm. You just had to feel it and it came out. Before, when I'd paint a fire, I'd paint a fire, but when I sprayed it, the fire just came by itself" (quoted in Martin 1990: 31). The privileging of process, of the action of painting (see Rosenberg below), associated with abstraction, was also used with more figurative styles through conceiving Thupelo to be a facility (Koloane 1995). Velile Soha has told me of the lack of resources available at the early workshops (personal communication 14th April 2003), but the importance of experimenting encouraged inventiveness and so overcame the shortage of conventional art materials, whatever form an artist produced.

The desires for risk taking, for experimenting, to depict "freedom, individuality and sincerity of expression" (Meyer Schapiro 1982: 215) associated with the New York school of abstract artists from the 1950s was appealing to black South African artists seeking to make art that was not premised on their racial or ethnic identity. This school sought to "achieve several related things: they attempted to reground art in more spontaneous human terms, and to recommence the construction of society along more equitable, disalienated lines" (Craven 1999: 29). They addressed themes such as elemental natural forces, social genesis and liberation theology, "thus conveying the classic avant-garde desire for a clean cultural slate from which to start social development anew and in a different direction than that which produced the present" (ibid.). However, it has been argued by some South African academics (and black artists) that for black South African artists to be using Abstract Expressionism was a form of American imperialism (see Peffer 2002 for a detailed consideration of this argument[10]). But this is to miss the subtlety of the particular socio-political context in which these artists were working. Apartheid South Africa did not allow for freedom of expression, and modernist abstraction was considered to offer this. The myth of modernism was premised on the universalism of the lone artistic hero, who, in USA, was the white heterosexual male, who could "generate a universal product that could speak for everyone, women, African Americans, and avowed homosexuals could not do this because their audiences would not accept their work as universal" (Gibson 2000: 314). Thupelo aimed to overturn this prejudice, while keeping in place the belief in the object of art as "the occasion of spontaneity or intense feeling [of] the painting symbolising an individual who realises freedom and deep engagement of the self within his work" (Schapiro 1982: 218), that lies at the centre of the myth but putting it to use in very specific circumstances.

Further Foundational Myths of Thupelo and the Legacy of Bill Ainslie

> *I have become conscious of an imagery emerging which seems to derive chiefly from Africa, although in evoking it I have deliberately used methods derived from the East as well as the West. The sense of space is of Eastern derivation, as opposed to the receding-size perspective that dominated Europe from the*

[10] For another summary see Frascina (ed.) 1985 and 2000. Freedom and the individual hero were ideals that were also being propagated by American culture, even being put to use as tools by the CIA and other state bodies as weapons during the Cold War. However, these accusations and counter-accusations are not relevant in considering the appeal to non-figuration by Thupelo in the 1980s.

> *Renaissance up to the turn of the century. The calligraphic nature of line is an Eastern thing as modified by contemporary American abstract expressionism. The floating image – also derives from America, [...] but the imagery is African, because of the dust, dung, rock lichen, mud, stains, spoons, bone-carvings, masks. (Bill Ainslie quoted in Sophia Ainslie 2004: 35)*

The need to care for oneself became a political act in apartheid South Africa, a realising of a need to negotiate a space between the collective and the personal. Ricky Burnett writes that "the search for selfhood is an empirical one and its passage cleaves between the collective and the personal" (1995: 9). While the position of David Koloane (and other black participants) is clearly discernable as answering a political need, a need which contested claims that the myth of modernism was an exclusive enterprise, it has seemingly been reclaimed by white South Africans. In so doing, it has lost its historical and political particularity, and is simply considered to be "wholly life-affirming" (Moffett quoted in Thupelo, 1986). This speaks of a desire to buy into the myth of modernism more literally (see Krauss 2000, and Bois and Krauss 1997). A pre-1994 model for resistance has come to be used as a means of ensuring a place for white South Africans in the new South Africa.

The role that Bill Ainslie has had in consolidating this understanding of Thupelo is considerable, and needs to be considered in some detail. His (renewed) influence has shaped the understanding of Thupelo and its aims, shifting it away from the historically and materially specific, reinvigorating a notion of inclusivity. But this is to be inclusive to white South African artists wanting to be involved in this enterprise, and who have felt the need to re-claim the romantic appeal of liberal humanism and the originality of the individual. This is to draw on Greenberg's apolitical and ahistorical conception of modern art in contrast to Koloane's explicit distancing from Greenberg's legacy (see above). However, white South Africans have now reclaimed these ideals as they try and find meaning and purpose in their lives, making Thupelo a particularly apt vehicle in the quest of these ideals. The desire for both self-purpose and self-knowledge offers itself as a continuity with the early workshops, while ideas of self-empowerment and self-knowledge have come to be privileged due to the desires to be healed described in the previous chapter; and it is to these concerns that we turn to in the final two sections of this chapter.

It is necessary to consider the beliefs that Ainslie held, and are apparent through his teaching at Johannesburg Art Foundation (JAF). Ainslie had planned to continue in his family's tradition of farming, and went to university to study Agriculture, but thought he might become a priest (Williams 1990: 4). While at university he met Selby Mvusi, which was "my first contact with a black artist and my first liberal education" (Ainslie quoted in Williams 2000). It is said that through their discussions, Ainslie formulated his vision for the future: "to help people find their voice and express it in their own way, to create an environment conducive to this expression, and to educate the society of the importance of this expression" (Ainslie 2004: 33). Ainslie's legacy has been described by Pat Williams, writing that "[To him] art was far more than making images or illustrating belief, it was the point of growth where human creative energy found its touchstone [...] His vision of art was as a means of growth and communication, ultimately of *reconciliation*, between the races" (1990: 3 my emphasis). William Kentridge wrote of Ainslie's enduring efforts to reconcile his commitments to humanitarian politics and abstract art, "which he saw as the most rigorous and serious kind of painting. He argued strongly that a humanitarian art practice was different from simply making images of or illustrating any political belief" (quoted in Court 1992: 98). JAF has its beginnings in 1972 when Ainslie's Studios opened from Ainslie's home in Parktown, in white suburban Johannesburg, as the first multi-racial art school in South Africa. "Part-time classes were set up for anyone, irrespective of race, age, education, gender or religion, who wished to learn about the making or appreciation of art" (Ainslie 2004: 33). The informality of the school made it difficult to incriminate anyone, even though it was under continual surveillance by the state's security police (ibid.). In 1982 the school and Ainslie family home, had moved to Saxonwold, to a large property and was re-named the Johannesburg Art Foundation, having been brought by five patrons of the school.

Bill Ainslie began his art teaching career at Cyrene Mission, founded by Ned Paterson in 1936,[11] in what was then Rhodesia. Paterson's biographer, David Walker tells us

[11] Ned Paterson was a missionary born in Scotland in 1895, but grew up in South Africa. After serving in the First World War, Paterson was given a grant to study at London's Central School of Arts and Crafts, which contained (according to Walker) the "spirit" of John Ruskin. Ruskin believed that ..."the perception and creation of beauty are as necessary to man as his daily bread" (quoted in Walker 1985:

that Paterson taught by demonstration and example (1985: 75), which is exactly what Thupelo intended, it's name meaning "to teach by example". That Paterson also loved to improvise and help others to improvise (1985: 76), which is another way of describing the experimentation which is also an ideal of Thupelo, while artists also talk about improvising at recent Thupelo workshops. The art made by Paterson's students were "an outpouring of the spirit, a journey of discovery, for the artist himself. The [art] is a unique expression of his personal journey" (Walker 1985: 74). What is clear, is that the teaching and working environment that Ainslie adopted at JAF was influenced from his experiences at Cyrene Mission, even though he was teaching at a much later time once Paterson had left to teach in Harare. The influence of the writings of Harold Rosenberg, who perceived the bare canvas as an "arena for action" (Bois 1997: 28), on Ainslie is also evident.

Harold Rosenberg was an art critic, writing in the 1950s and 1960s America, and coined the phrase, "aura of the act" (Gibson 2000: 314) to describe the art that was made by "American Action Painters" (Rosenberg [1952] 1960). This privileged the act of making a picture over what lines or colours, or images appear on the resulting object (Shapiro and Shapiro 1985: 139), and can also be described as method or process painting (Court 1992: 48). Rosenberg declared that "Art as action rests in the enormous assumption that the artist accepts as real only that which he is in the process of creating" (1960: 32). Rosenberg's conception, which has become one of the most durable popular versions of Abstract Expressionism, demanded the kind of spontaneity of action propounded by existentialists such as Merleau-Ponty and Sartre (Gibson 2000: 315). This is to hold the meaning of work to be intrinsic and universal, for "the action painter decided to paint ... just TO PAINT" (Orton 2000: 276). There was no intention to "reproduce, re-design, analyze or 'express' an object, actual or imagined. What was to go on the canvas was not a picture but an event (Rosenberg 1960: 25), "what matters is the revelation contained in the act" (ibid.: 27). Rosenberg considered this new movement to be essentially, a religious movement, but one experienced in secular terms, the "result has been the creation of private myths" (1960: 31). Fred Orton has emphasised the importance of recognising the action painter's activity as defining his identity at a moment of grand crisis, with the

11)... that "true art is a process of joyful growth" and of "art as a necessary *liberator* of the spirit of everyone" (ibid. my emphasis).

'actpainting' as an act that is inseparable from the biography of the artist (ibid.). Ainslie considered the artist to be "concerned with looking, or listening or feeling, with the whole of his being and recording what he finds with care" (1961). Rosenberg believed this "new painting to be an act that is inseparable from the biography of the artist, that is a moment in the adulterated mixture of his life, that is of the same metaphysical substance as the artist's existence, and that has broken down every distinction between art and life" (Rosenberg 1960: 28).

A reading of Rosenberg's essay by Fred Orton has privileged its revolutionary intention: "the action painters acted according to their historical circumstances and entirely in their own interests. The 'saving moment' occurred 'when the painter felt himself released from Value-myth of past recognition' an 'attempte to initiate a new moment' in which he would 'realise his total personality-myth of future self-recognition. It was here that the painter's character change became [...] synonymous with revolution" (2000: 277). Bill Ainslie considered an artist to be a "liminal person (2000: 26), who rejected society's norms, opened society's eyes to the surrounding inequalities (Ainslie 2004: 33), yet he simultaneously considered abstract art to be non-racial. For him, abstraction as the "most defiant, most revolutionary way one could possibly paint" (Williams 1990: 10), which individualises a maker's intentions. Ainslie believed in the power of abstraction, as a technique that allowed for the promotion of "freedom of expression and discovery, [allowing] *individuals* to experiment and take risks" (Trappler 2000: 25, my emphasis). His daughter, Sophia Ainslie believes "abstraction opened up a means of understanding painting as a landscape that could become meaningful as an expression in itself" (2004: 34). The possibility for this to be revolutionary is here witnessed as morphing into the therapeutic, away from the revolutionary.

Ainslie's art career began with producing figurative works, thus embarking on the same journey of awakening as many black artists (as we will see, white and black artists working in Cape Town in the Noughties), which implies a universal process of creative discovery. His own work has been described by Marilyn Martin of the South African National Gallery as "a celebration of life. The emphasis is on plasticity and expression rather than on narrative; the aim is to reach the energies which animate the psychic life of the individual, to penetrate the spiritual being" (quoted in Williams

1990: 10). Moreover, Ainslie is quoted as saying "we don't make art in an attempt to change people, we make it to change ourselves, and if it works it will change others by the appeal it makes" (ibid.). The popularity with understanding and describing art (Ainslie's and others) as spiritual was a concern of Ainslie himself, "African art is avowedly spiritual. It has to do with relationships with ancestors and the ancestors' relationship with God. Now spirit has to do with imagery and marks have to do with energy" (2000: 26). Ainslie also spoke of the "ineffable that constitutes a work of art" and of the "artist's job to remind people of that transcendent side which underlies or overlays human activity" (2000: 27), seemingly being influenced by Rosenberg's transcendentalism, but perhaps also the artist Wassily Kandinsky. Kandinsky wrote of the belief that there is a fundamental truth that can be accessed through art, through externalising "inner feeling" (Kandinsky 1977: 1). "An example of this today is our sympathy, our spiritual relationship, with the Primitives. Like ourselves, these artists sought to express in their work only internal truths, renouncing in consequence all consideration of external form" (ibid.). This is art that is emotional/spiritual, non-material (ibid.: 17) and also timeless and thus ahistorical.

Williams writes that while Ainslie did not become a priest, he once told her that JAF was his monastery (1990: 7), and Bill Ainslie, is widely remembered for his "spirituality".[12] When confronting Government officials (during apartheid), or when asked about the worthiness of art teaching, Ainslie's wife, Fieke recalled that she would respond with "but what about people's souls?" (personal communication 26th August 2003). Ainslie wrote:

> [W]hite South Africans are not really interested in art, and this is because they have such a limited interest in life [...]. In the great and vital choice all men must make between gaining the world or gaining the soul, they have taken a majority decision for their world [...] That is why there our painting is so much on the surface, so concerned with exteriors, with crusts and ashes. That is why there is a preponderance of landscape and still-life painting, and more recently a superficial decorative abstraction. And that is why there is such paucity of painting where the whole of man is the main concern of vision. (1965: 45)

[12] I was recently informed by a white Zimbabwean woman who had spent time teaching in South Africa during the 1980s, that Ainslie was very spiritual (3rd December 2004).

This deficiency of white South Africans is considered to be remedied by an interest in spiritual matters and conceiving of art as spiritual expression. What JAF and Thupelo have been understood to be doing is to bring people together who have been "isolated from each other and intra-psychically split as a result of the repressive and schismatic forces of Apartheid" (Trappler 2000: 25). This spiritual unifying gloss is conceived to be liberating from the conservative nature of white South African society, declaring oneself to be spiritually engaged is held as being a means to embrace the unknown in general and black South Africans in particular.

It follows that Ainslie was a teacher who was able to appeal to black artists wanting to escape stereotyping, but also to white people who wanted to embrace the transcendental approach that he advocated. Mary-Ann (a participant at the 2003 international Thupelo Workshop, chapter 4) told me that Ainslie had taught her, and had a lasting impact on how she hoped to guide other people's teaching (personal communication 12th February 2003) (see chapters 4 and 7). Ainslie gained this reputation through his interest in individualising people and the supposed non-racial content of non-figurative art, which made it possible to bypass (or ignore) race issues through promoting the importance of the individual psyche or spirit. Fieke explained to me that Bill could not teach you to paint, but he would teach you to see (personal communication 26th August 2003). Ainslie explained himself: "One of the most difficult lessons I have had to learn as an artist and teacher is that I do not know how to make an artwork, nor how to teach people to do it. The difficulty has to do with getting used to being lost, and of working in the dark. Teaching consists of being a guide; it is more of an initiation than an education – and it consists of leading, and being led, towards the threshold of the unconditional" (quoted in Williams 1990: 7). Elsewhere Ainslie has written:

> The thing about teaching is that it gives me plenty of time for my own painting. One of the things that's gratifying about it, is that even people who don't become artists have, through coming into the studio, changed their lives. I had one girl, for instance, who was in the middle of a nervous breakdown. She came here and worked and after a while became a new person.
> I recently heard a comment from a teacher at the university that teaching privately is simply offering therapy to old ladies. But this is not so. No one wants to learn art as a form of therapy. But still, any creative activity is therapy in the best sense. Picasso described it as 'offloading yourself'. Henry Miller said 'to paint is to love again'.

> My attitude is a twofold one. I treat everybody as a potential artist, even though all teaching institutions know that most people will never make artists. The second point is that the people who don't make it still go away with an increase in awareness.
> I have no real quarrel with people who come to my classes as a hobby. My teaching is totally open. I try to coax everybody to find their own way of working. It's not academic, in the sense that I push something as the right way. I'll take a person as far as I can in their own way. When I feel I have nothing more to teach them, I'll send them away. Otherwise I wouldn't chase anyone out of a class.
> I try to teach people to see accurately. I try to help them develop a sense of the importance of space manipulation, how space is affected by form, line, the tactile quality of the paint. (quoted in Lawrence, 1973)

Ainslie's belief in the importance of interests coming from the students, that the basis of education should be from the student's willingness for self-exploration, might encourage comparisons with Paulo Freire (see chapter 1). While the importance of bringing together different students as remembered by Pat Mautloa (personal communication, 5th May 2003), and can be conceived as producing a kind of alchemy, a means to proclaim the new. Ainslie has described an art workshop in a similar way, as:

> [...] a quiet place where one concentrates on the work, where distractions are eliminated. Where one learns to detect the traps that inhibit creativity. These traps are the predictables – the patterns of habit, the unthinking and unquestioned thought or action which close us into a structure which becomes a prison for us and others [...] There was another way: the unknown way – the thing that has never been tried before, for which no conditions had been prepared, and for which no restrictive attitudes have had a chance to develop – and that was the way of creativity. (quoted in Williams 1990: 1 – 2)

This is to evoke the revolutionary, the avant-garde but also the sublime. And it is this ability to evoke both, without being threatening, which has proved to be so popular with contemporary participants at Thupelo.

The Enduring Appeal of Thupelo

How participants and organisers of workshops held under the umbrella of TAT localise the generic characteristics such as interactions and experimentations is itself central to TAT's identity. This section and the following chapter will consider what this has entailed in South Africa, in particular how the heritage of the Thupelo workshops in Johannesburg during the last days of apartheid have been appropriated to a particular set of needs in post-apartheid Cape Town. This particular

appropriation has involved a revival of Bill Ainslie's legacy, which has perhaps been enhanced by the mythologizing of his memory since his death. Ainslie was killed in a car crash coming back from Pachipamwe II, 1989, the art workshop that he had helped set up in Zimbabwe in 1988.[13] But there are also strong connections to the rhetoric used by other Thupelo participants, including Garth Erasmus when he declared, at Triangle, that:

> [...] Art gives me –
> FREEDOM of thought
> FREEDOM of expression
> FREEDOM of choice [...] (1985 Yearbook)

Such accounts highlight ways in which the language deployed at these workshops, have been adopted or appropriated to the therapeutic needs of post-apartheid South Africa, particularly where segregation is at its starkest, such as in Cape Town (see chapter 2). Participants of the early workshops (Garth, David, Kay and Lionel) talk of the freedom they experienced at Thupelo and the good that it does for oneself, personally and as an artist. And this is also what is so appealing to post-1994 nation building rhetoric, the themes are very adaptable to/compatible with the contemporary needs to heal and understand, both oneself and others. It is also the means by which pastoral care is realised in contemporary Cape Town. This theme of discovering one's *own* voice surfaces again and again, at workshops attended by white middle aged, middle class women, graduates from CAP and the Thupelo workshops.

When the Bag Factory started as a means to address the needs of artists living and working in Johannesburg on a long-term basis, Jill Trappler (Bill Ainslie's niece) led the initiative to bring Thupelo to Cape Town. While there were a number of regional Cape Town workshops before 1995, that year started a precedent, when several international artists were invited to Thupelo. The workshops now emphasised the many different artists to participate: "two installation artists, a metal sculptor, a wood sculptor, figurative, non-figurative and combination artists. These ingredients were thrown into a cooking pot of creative processing and exchange" (Trappler 1996). The diversity of artists seemingly confirming participation in the "new" South Africa, as

[13] See Elsbeth Court 1992 for a detailed account of this workshop.

defined by Mandela's Rainbow, as well as being a part of the international community. The shifts at play are succinctly summarised by Garth Erasmus:

> Thupelo has become like a universal workshop, liberal because the local needs and stimulus has changed, it is not so much a racial thing now, it is about artists. After 1994 there came a non-racial stage and Thupelo found itself on a similar path. This path is a universal liberal path. It is no longer about helping black people move away from racial categories [...] Thupelo has had a different impetus from the other workshops in the Triangle network, it was established to be for disadvantaged people who are the majority. The emphasis of the other workshops has been to get artists of good quality together. Thupelo is getting closer to that kind of thing now – the idea that new artwork can be produced out of a particular mix of people that come together. [...] The aim of such a workshop will be to make everyone equal, and that it will also be *therapy* for everyone. International artists will be exposed to the African context [...] For the local black participants, it will be about exposure to people from overseas, and different modes of materials and techniques. Therapy [for the white South African participants] will be in breaking down previous ideas of whatever. (personal communication 2nd April 2003)

This appeal of the universal "individual artist" has been considered by Roger Benjamin (1998), in which he considers what made an Australian Aboriginal artist, Emily Kame Kngwarreye so popular with the non-Aboriginal art world. Benjamin considers how there were two aspects of Kngwarreye's persona as an artist that strike a very specific cord within the mythology of the individual artist as it has developed in Western tradition (1998: 49). Firstly, is the "specific privileges attached to the idea of great productivity, of an artist so 'obsessed' with art, so 'driven' to create that (s)he issues an endless stream of quality art [...] To say of Kngwarreye that she produced some three thousand paintings in eight years of work is to allude to the cultural sublime, to a state of possession by art that is absolute, exclusive and nonpareil" (ibid.). Second, the artist's extreme age,[14] for the art-world in exceptional cases, reserve special reverence for an artist of great age. Their art seems to broach new areas of sublimity. The summation of a lifetime of reflection and experience is given an ineffable quality..." (ibid.: 51). Another reason for the appeal of Kngwarreye's work is attributed to the considered spiritual depth of her work, the "tantalising" and "ill-translated" Dreaming stories... Benjamin suggests that "for most admirers of this European and American art, the knowledge that abstract styles were generated out of more than 'superficial' formalistic considerations will foster a perception of the work

[14] Kngwarreye was a painter in her eighties.

as deeply serious, indeed profound in motivation" (ibid.: 52). Benjamin's conclusion adds more poignancy to Thupelo in Cape Town; he suggests that "hanging on the argument for universality is, in the Australian context, the vexed question of reconciliation – the process of political and cultural negotiation, between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal [...] When a metropolitan audience feels at ease with the Aboriginal painting, it can congratulate itself that 'reconciliation' across the gaping cultural, economic and racial divide has occurred" (ibid.: 53). This has been considered to have occurred through, what can almost be conceived of as a need among white (Australians and) South Africans, to take back the spiritual, to make it accessible to whites by re-asserting myths of modernism as well as humanism.

This notion of reconciliation has drawn on hegemonic interests in the sublime, and the power of it as a means of overcoming material differences. An apolitical existential-humanist (Orton 2000: 262) account of art-making has had extensive appeal among Cape Town's white artists who seek to be inclusive, which privileges a universal spiritual force or sublimation in modernist abstraction. Here, what is particularly attractive about notions of the transcendental self is the potential for it to be a resource for establishing innocence: it can be used to position a person outside of history and social context (Steyn 2001b: 109). This type of individuation implies that one "'really' consists of an individual 'essence', the 'true self' that transcends the (fortunate or unfortunate) accident of one's 'outer' appearance or social position" (ibid.). The following chapter will consider how this understanding is deployed by many artists at contemporary Thupelo workshops, and the various implications at stake in this position post-1994.

Conclusion

The early Thupelo artists were concerned with making art that led to self-realisation, that was "true" to oneself, and a means to care for the self. This chapter has been concerned with the specific use of the myth of universal modernism, which was used politically within the context of apartheid. These ideas of self-realisation and self-discovery have since been harnessed to the therapeutic enterprise. Notions of freedom, empowerment and self-growth are notions that are central to the enterprise of psychosocial intervention, which, while being characteristic of Cape Town's liberal enterprises, ignore the material conditions which various people use to make abstract

art, preferring to adhere to the myths of modernism (Krauss 1997). This is a backlash against the very specific context in which black South African artists were using modernist abstraction; it is to reclaim modernism as a Western, universal hegemonic force for good. The "humanist" theory that underlies the universality of modernism, that it is art that can "speak" to people across cultures anywhere in the world, has been shown to be a Eurocentric projection (Benjamin 1998: 53). As such, these workshops can be characterised as liberatory rather than analytical (Deliss 3rd December 2004), due to their embracing of liberation as a universal humanist belief. The following chapter will consider in detail two workshops organised by the Cape Town Thupelo committee, during my period of research. Among the issues raised through analysing the two workshops, will be the fluctuation between the security to be found in the self-absorbed character of the sublime being, and the ideal of cultural synergy. But the striving of synergy falls more often than not into awkward attempts at realising multiculturalism, in which role-playing becomes central, thus restricting the potential for "transitions", both personal and collective.

Chapter 4: Thupelo Cape Town: Between Sublimation and Synergy

Introduction

During the course of my research, two Thupelo workshops took place. The first was the Regional Thupelo Workshop, open to fourteen artists living and working in the vicinity of Cape Town, was held in the annexe to the South African National Gallery (SANG). The second was the International Thupelo Workshop, with twenty-one participants, half were chosen from the international Triangle network, while the other half were chosen from South African applicants. This workshop took place on a farm in a rural area of the Western Cape, and included dormitory accommodation for participants during the two weeks. The aim of this chapter will be to unpack the ideologies and experiences of both organisers and participants that have contributed to a shift in conceptualising the purpose of Thupelo.[1]

Through analysing the workshops that I attended, I hope to consider how the workshops in Cape Town are addressing issues and needs that are particular to contemporary Cape Town. These needs are centred on conceiving of art-making as being ahistorical and apolitical, which is very different from the understanding of using non-figuration at the early workshops in the 1980s, as was discussed in the previous chapter. Instead, at the contemporary workshops, apolitical art is considered to be a means by which different socio-economic groups in Cape Town and South Africa as a whole can experience or realise unity or synergy, and the building of a "new" community. These ideals are promoted by the organisers of Thupelo and impinge on initiatives intended to facilitate interaction at the workshops. Application forms state that in "a society which has been divided on so many levels, where self-assertion and motivation has not been encouraged, much work has to be done on an inter-personal and group level to correct the imbalances of the past" (2000). A popular guide for negotiating this "new" multicultural environment is psychosocial intervention, which acts to interpret, explain and map out this interaction. This entails an interest in the self and self-betterment, which presents the workshops as providing an environment in which "artists develop not only within their art but also within themselves as a whole" (greatmoreart.org/thupelo/information, 8th December 2003).

[1] See Court (1992) and Bardhan (2000) for two detailed descriptions of TAT workshops, which the authors had attended.

This concerns the privileging of emotional responses, or self-esteem over intellectual understanding (Pupavac 2001: 360), and the importance of inter-personal awareness and consciousness. While the ideal for realising this interaction is synergy, I will suggest that in practice this manifests itself as a kind of forced multiculturalism. A more productive and less romantic aim and way of conceiving of togetherness at the workshops would be to follow Bruce Robbins in reclaiming the term, *cosmopolitanism*. Robbins considers cosmopolitanism to be "a wilfully provocative word" (1996: 182), which the left has shunned because "it connects international or global subject-matter with the embarrassingly local placement of intellectuals in relatively privileged institutions" (ibid.). As such, cosmopolitanism contains a rigour that "multicultural inclusiveness" (ibid.) is unable to achieve; why this is so will be discussed during the course of this chapter.

Reaching for the Sublime: Thupelo as a Healing and Growth Enterprise

Thupelo can be considered as a highly ritualised event that aims to promote healing and personal growth, and evokes Arnold van Gennep's theory of rites of passage (1960). The diction used when describing the workshops conjures up a nurturing, beneficial experience. Thupelo is considered to be "part of the human spirit [that] warms the soul" (Trappler in Thupelo brochure 2000). Rites of passage are rites that indicate and constitute transitions between states, and at the workshops they can apparently add profundity and encourage a mystical interpretation of the experience. Turner tells us "the subject of passage is, in the liminal period, structurally if not physically, 'invisible'" (Turner 1967: 95), and bears much similarity with those who perceive Thupelo as having a profound impact on participants, allowing a withdrawal from societal responsibility. During his opening speech at the regional workshop, Vuyile reminded the audience that "Thupelo has provided artists with a space to *not* have to reflect on what is happening outside, it is divorced from reality [...] it is the process [that artists are engaged in as they make their work] that reflects reality, the struggle to find yourself in that process reflects struggles outside of this artists' space" (personal communication, 29th October, 2002, my emphasis). The workshop acts as a protracted marginal phrase, with participants taking on a "liminal persona" (Turner 1967: 95), or a "transitional-being" (ibid.). This notion of being removed from wider society was at its most stark during the international workshop, due to the physical

isolation of the workshop, the length of the workshop and the participants living in close proximity.

The notion of containment was very significant at the international workshop, where participants were not meant to leave the workshop site (the farm land).[2] The workshop was also to be contained by controlling access to it. Outsiders were not encouraged, since they were considered disruptive to the harmony of the workshop or rite of passage. It was also significant that the group consisted only of artists, and the particular possibilities this allowed for interacting. One participant, Philippe explained that how he spoke about his work to fellow artists was very different to what he would tell other people about his work. To this extent the workshop also conforms to the custom of secrecy amongst initiates in a rite of passage. The need for containment was also evident in decisions about the day trip which participants are encouraged to go on sometime during the middle of the workshop. The trip is meant to offer a break from the immediate workshop environment, a chance to reflect on what is happening, and be able to return to the workshop refreshed. The committee spent much time considering how this was to be managed, as it still needed to be contained, for the participants were still initiates in the liminal stage of ritual, and the experience needed to be sensitive to this. The day out needed to not be too crowded or busy, but also not too isolated, and staying with the group was also considered to be important, as a form of reassurance (committee meeting, 22nd January 2003). The end of the workshop also evokes the significance of containment at its starkest; here it is the loss of containment on arriving back in Cape Town and the accompanying feeling of deflation, despite organisers organising a shared lunch on return to Cape Town, to bring the group back together.[3]

Thupelo was also drawn on as a rite of passage in order to make sense of the workshop as it ended, to give the experience a concrete meaning. Artists drew on this resource in reflecting on a workshop when asked to give a statement about the experience. The statements are often affirmative in their appraisal of the workshop,

[2] Hiring a bus on which all participants were expected to ride on to and from the farm, discouraged local participants from bringing their own cars. I was to pick up cigarettes, sweets etc from the nearest town, 5 miles away.

[3] Alex (Thupelo's administrator) told me that people often "lose it" on returning to Cape Town, irrespective of attempts by the organisers to contain the group.

which acts symbolically, giving "an outward and visible from to an inward and conceptual process" (Turner 1967: 96). This gives meaning and significance to an event that might otherwise be quite elusive, but it also alludes to a romantic appeal to the notion of creativity itself.

> What a fantastic life-changing experience mixing with people of many cultures and art mediums. It has inspired my work in more ways than one and given me wonderful memories to take home to Australia. (Tina, artist statement, personal communication, 21st February 2003)

> For me the workshop that we just had was like a second birth. It allowed me to question my own creation. If we had to do it again I am ready. Thank you very much/merci beaucoup. (Philippe, artist statement, personal communication, 21st February 2003)

> A space for self-realisation, live long Goedgedacht! (Dylan, artist statement, personal communication, 21st February 2003)

These comments are made as a way to give the workshop a tangible identity, which is in turn – or simultaneously – advocated by the organisers, through a romantic and emotional-laden appeal to the importance of art-making. Therapeutic language is a means through which people can make sense of their experiences and which also makes the experience readily available. The sense of loss and a realisation of the bonds that have formed over the last two weeks, and the sense of containment, central to the liminal state of a rite-de-passage, are key to understanding the emotional focus of the participant statements on completion of the workshop. But it is also demonstrates the significance of the workshop as a "betwixt and between period" (Turner 1967: 110), that demands special or sensitive guidance, and psychosocial intervention becomes that guidance.

During the workshops, the role fell to Jill to guide or orient participants "through the journey" (personal communication, 6th February 2003), by presenting the aims and motivations of the workshop. The main means of achieving this was to give the "opening speech" at the start of each workshop, but it was also possible through visits. During her speech at the regional workshop, Jill focused on explaining the energy and development that artists will gain from working in a workshop environment. And she ended her introduction with "you should get really tired, and just go home and sleep,

remember your dreams and come back early next morning" (personal communication 12th October 2002). This suggestion to remember your dreams is a great personal belief of Jill's that features largely at other workshops that she holds (see chapter 6). It is also very apt for a climate that encourages self-reflection and self-exploration. Jill also alluded to "tricks we play on ourselves which inhibit us, [but] that here no one is looking; no one is here to judge you. The thing is to look for newness and the creativity, dive into collage stuff, do something new" (ibid.). The issue of judging was to become very significant at both workshops, causing much confusion over the boundaries between criticising and being judgemental. How criticism could be constructive while not being too personal or judgemental, when art-making is considered to be personal, will be considered in later sections of this chapter and chapter 7.

Jill speaks very seductively and to this extent it seems that her opening speech is very influential in setting the scene for how participants conduct themselves and understand what is happening during the workshop. Two South African participants articulated the importance of Jill's speeches in directing the workshops. Beth (who had participated at the regional workshop) commented in her application to the international workshop: "so much of what was felt during the workshop was as a result of the 'talk' given at the beginning. One carries these Thupelo principles with one as one works" (Motivation Statement, 2002). Janet (committee member) spoke of the importance of remembering Jill's speech as a means to make the workshop focused and to draw on during the workshop (personal communication, 1st October 2002). Jill's speech did act as an anchorage for the workshop, a means to make what is happening tangible but also simultaneously, to seem profound. The desire to escape the demands of the art-market and the opportunity to "create spontaneously" (Koloane 1999: 26) of the early workshops have become muddled, pressurized and caught up with a broader wish for self-understanding, believed to be possible through the "creative energy" (Jill, personal communication, 12th October 2002) present at the workshop.

I will quote in full the opening speech that Jill gave to open the international workshops to elucidate this paradox:

> Six months ago the journey started that has brought us here today, some will come tomorrow and some couldn't come.
> I need to explain the history of the Thupelo workshops in order for you to locate yourself. This is a relocation in terms of yourself and in relation to your work.
> The Triangle Arts Trust grew in spirit, involving a mixture of Africans – which is unusual.
> You need to see the workshop as a process. Two weeks can become a time warp; the creative process is often like that. You need to locate yourself, find references. Your references have been taken away – this is a new place.
> Work will either seduce you or throw you off. Interaction and support is very, very important, if you are drinking too much you need to talk to others about it, or smoking too much, talk to yourself, peer group and your work. People drink a lot, smoke a lot and fall in love at workshops. Stay with your work, and remember that this is contained, that there are circles within circles, and that it is a real privilege to be here. It's a privilege to be able to work 24 hours a day.
> Bill Ainslie described the workshops as a quiet place where you are away from distractions. You need to identify distractions - they will be there.
> This group has slowly found itself together, it's not random, it has a purpose and each workshop has its own personality.
> The slide show is very important, as education [...] it is important to articulate where you are coming from, to shift your paradigm.
> You may want to de-toxify and rush off into town. But you need to work through that process. These are strong suggestions, there are no rules.
> You need to be awake and articulate on Monday 17th for the press day, it is important to talk to the visitors/press, important for exhibition.
> It is very difficult to get you psyche here then it is very difficult to get it to leave. Difficult to disconnect also. It's a journey which has been going for 20 years and has amazing energy.
> Workshops can become a bit like pressure cookers, but I don't think that this will happen here. There is a day out if you choose to go. It is good to go, get a perspective on your work. The walkabout is important, that you are all there and give feedback. This is an adult experience. Feedback is very important.
> Thupelo means to teach by example, it is a Sotho word, there are no Sotho people here, but the word still applies to all of us. There is no teacher and there are no students, if you internalise that then you are both.
> You'll be so inspired that you'll work 19 hours a day, I went to a workshop and I had malaria, but I still worked 19 hours a day. (personal communication, 6th February 2003)

Like the regional workshop address, this speech is very persuasive, creating a feel-good environment with clear aims. An identity is presented in which participants can feel that they are opening up and exploring being an artist, both as a professional and as a way of being with oneself. This paradoxical desire for spontaneity and self-understanding is most clearly present in the notion of experiment. To experiment suggests spontaneity, yet the process of experimentation is expected to materialise in a safe, risk-free environment. How this experience of experimentation is considered

to manifest itself is difficult to define, and there probably cannot be a benchmark for deeming what is experimentation and what is not. Yet, the idea of making experimenting tangible at the workshop is extremely appealing. It is considered as being achievable through expectations of self-discovery; which is possible only in a safe place. Notions of therapy and experimenting come to be intricately combined, becoming an affirmation of the success of the workshop as rite of passage. It is perhaps not surprising that the artists who felt most vulnerable were the ones who took Jill's speeches extremely seriously, and sought out her approval when she visited the workshops. Jill's interpretation of the workshop gave these participants a sense of purpose but also security and sense of containment, which is considered to be necessary in order to extend oneself (see chapter 7 for a more detailed analysis of this).

Jill's speech also acted as a way of controlling the environment and the expectations of participants, a way of defining and clarifying the house rules, which direct participants towards the ethos of the workshop, as defined by the organisers. Containment is seen as essential to the desired outcomes. It is also a great reassurance to artists who may be less confident and sure of what they are interested in and hoping to achieve from attending the workshop; they draw on the *workshop speak* to orientate themselves. Feelings of vulnerability came to be recognised as an important, even necessary, contribution to the experience of making art in a shared environment. This is significant at a workshop where participants need to over come inhibitions so as to be able to produce work. The understanding that there is the potential to fall in love, to get drunk or stoned is compatible with the understanding that the workshop is a holistic experience. Participating is understood to be encompassing: like art making is meant to affect the whole self. It also an example of how a therapeutic interpretation of Thupelo is perhaps inevitable; being drunk or stoned or in love it affects people's emotions and behaviour, and how they articulate themselves. These stimulants are also believed to enable people to break down barriers, which is an appealing notion to many at Thupelo, and which implies a ritualistic and transformative dimension to the workshop.

Sidney Littlefield Kasfir notes that decisions over which artists should be invited to workshops "may be even handed, exclusionary or simply idiosyncratic, but never

neutral" (1999: 87). A small number of participants were selected on the basis that the workshop would benefit them in terms of self-development and healing. Catherine was one such participant, whose behaviour and intentions conformed to the personal growth and healing agenda set out by Jill. Jill was aware that Catherine had recently come out of a mental breakdown, and it was this factor that made Jill want to invite her. Catherine was a middle-aged white South African woman, who shifted from being extremely involved at the start of the workshop – wanting to share stories round a fire in the evenings – to becoming withdrawn, and having emotional outbursts. Catherine started to console herself with the belief that Jill would come and rescue her when she came for the Press Day (during the second week of the workshop). It became apparent that Catherine thought immensely highly of Jill, to the extent that she explained that she had felt Jill's presence to be with her when she did her presentation during a walkabout. When Jill did visit, she asked Catherine to step down from the committee and suggested that she consult a therapist when she got back to Cape Town after the workshop. It was also clear that Catherine enjoyed the multicultural mix of artists at the workshop, Catherine had participated at a number of workshops and has taught at CAP (see chapter 2), yet she told me that black people make art intuitively, differently, and that this inspires her. This notion of difference is at odds with the (historical) principles of Thupelo, yet the organisers handpicked her. But it also acts as evidence of the inability of Thupelo to challenge prejudice, especially as Catherine had attended Thupelo before. While there can be an argument made for running these workshops as a challenge to the problems of segregation and prejudice, the assumption that a two-week workshop is long enough to alter people's perceptions is clearly mistaken.

Another participant who was invited to participate at the international workshop without having applied was Moya who had participated at the regional workshop and shared a studio at Greatmore. As will also be discussed in the following chapter, Moya was involved in both Greatmore and Thupelo on the grounds that he was young. It was considered to be of great importance to get younger artists involved in the committee, as well as the workshops themselves, and Moya was asked to be on the committee. It is with a sense of pride that Alex comments on the Thupelo website: "It was a very hard and intensive learning experience for all involved especially within the organisations and committee structures where we had placed

very young and enthusiastic individuals into serious positions of responsibility within the workshop" (www.greatmoreart.org/thupelo 27th February 2004). This is evocative of the challenges that it is expected participants (or initiates) will be faced with during the workshop, and the personal transformations that are anticipated to occur. It is deemed essential to "bring together 'older' artists so that they can be encouraged to take a strong lead as role models in our society and also to introduce 'younger' artists into the workshops so that they, in turn, can go out and provide skills and opportunities to their communities" (ibid.). In her opening speech, Jill referred to the idea of being both teacher and student after Paulo Freire (2004 and see chapter 1 and 2), which carries with it the illusory idea that there was no hierarchy of power. This conception of empowerment is particularly popular in an environment such as South Africa, where participants will have had vastly different backgrounds and experiences. It is worth noting that Catherine was also invited onto the committee, being thought of as a means to consolidate the experience of empowerment offered at the workshop. Attending a workshop is meant to have a lasting impact for participants; Robert Loder notes that "it may take some time for the workshop experience to gestate and the effect of the workshop may only become apparent some months or even years later" (1995: 29). The profundity is perhaps considered to have a more immediate impact through encouraging participants to take on roles of responsibility, such as were offered to Moya and Catherine; Moya as a younger artist, and Catherine to build her self-esteem.

When talking with Garth Erasmus (see chapter 3) during the opening of the regional exhibition, we were able to discuss what was happening behind the formulaic descriptions at the workshop. After praising the exhibition, he did concede that there were differences from the early workshops: "it's amazing to have all that creativity happening – none of it was there a week ago. But that artists will go back to doing what they were doing before" (20th October 2002). This is at odds with the heady language that is used to analyse what is happening at the workshop. Garth explains that what was different about the early workshops was that "they were so important, they were about being saved, about being reborn". While the urgency of the workshops in Johannesburg cannot be denied, it is precisely this *same* desire for saliency that is apparent at the contemporary workshops. This ideology, which borders on the religious or revelatory, is sought after as a means to credit the

workshops with a weightiness that makes them more than simply a luxury. One regional workshop participant, Frankie, told me what a luxury it was to be able to make art uninterrupted for two weeks, but Frankie also expressed a desire to "experience" the notion of "process", that is so popular a notion at Thupelo. During the walkabout, Frankie explained that he aspired to be able to have his work develop as he works, of using painting as an means of being able to start working without knowing what the finished product will be and his inability to achieve this; "I have no inspiration in my work, for the work is finished in my head before I have started". Here, we see the expectation that Thupelo will have a profound impact on the experience of making art, and frustration when this is not felt; the wish to make the experience tangible is evident among both participants and organisers.

The talk of a nurturing and safe space as a means to challenge oneself is questionable; more specifically, this is to ask to what extent it is possible to measure the degree to which an artist is being challenged. When Jill asked the artists to introduce themselves at the Regional, the majority chose to introduce themselves as being open-minded and willing to explore/ experiment: "I want to find something new", "I'm open to anything" and "I'm a photographer and everything else". These declarations of openness are typical *workshop speak*, and their repetition at this workshop responds to and affirms the rallying cry of Jill's speeches. Being "open" is an important ideal and leads us to the next section, which is concerned primarily with the public declaration of this openness. This is alleged to be newness as characterised by modernism (see chapter 3), but also openness to new social contexts (synergy). Yinka Shonibare offers a succinct analysis of this particular dynamic in play at a multicultural artists' workshop, after attending Tenq, Senegal in 1994. "What we must realise as we sing the praises of multiculturalism in art is that there is not modernism, there are modernisms, which cannot be divorced from the social and economic context of any given modernism. Perhaps what is universal is what seems like a consensus towards a notion of existentialism, the acknowledgment of individuality" (Shonibare 1994: 200). How synergy is to be expressed, while acknowledging individuality is the subject of the next section.

Fig. 4.1. Regional Thupelo Workshop, October 2002

Fig. 4.2. International Thupelo Workshop, February 2003

Striving for Synergy: Multicultural Thupelo

> *Thupelo aims to create a synergy that will enlarge the artistic community and foster inter-relationships through the workshop concept. (Thupelo Mission Statement 1994)*

A few years ago a curator/art critic from Barcelona, Pep Subiros, visited South Africa, (Cape Town and Johannesburg) and wrote of the changes that he thought he had witnessed in the subsequent catalogue. Writing of the Victoria and Alfred Waterfront in Cape Town, Subiros concludes: "Another of its charms is that amidst all this hustle and bustle there are still enough open spaces, and *enough* of a mix of people to allow for the unexpected to occur" (2001: 46, my emphasis). Later, when meeting with the artist Willie Bester, Subiros recalled his favourable impression of the Waterfront. Bester responded by "look[ing] at me with suspicion" (ibid.: 48) before saying "The immense majority of blacks don't have the money to even pay the fare down to the Waterfront [...] It's a place for the middle and upper classes, and that basically means whites. But what about the three black musicians? Ah, yes, they're always there, they even appear on the tourist brochures" (ibid.). Subiros writes that he feels ashamed of his naivety; however, while he can be applauded for his honesty about his misunderstanding, it does bring to light the difficulties over how "mixing" is defined and recognised, as well as what is "enough" "mixing"? This section will be concerned with this question, arguing that the idea that any interaction is better than none might encourage complacency rather than engaged multiculturalism.

Melissa Steyn and Khanya Motshabi have offered what they consider to be a "powerful foundation on which to build a new future" (1996: viii) for South Africa, based on utilising the notion of "synergy". They explain that cultural synergy as envisioned in the book they edited would consist of "an inclusive South Africa in which different cultural heritages are respected and validated, thus allowing the evolution of a greater South African culture that emphasise and enhance the best of its constituents. Such a culture would have a greater repertoire to offer the population than the original cultural strains offers separately" (ibid.: vii). They also stipulate that cultural synergy or long-term societal reconstruction is to be based on genuine dialogue, where participants in the process have to be full and equal partners. That South Africans should "all enter into the re-negotiation of our society with a sense of the worth of our own heritage, and of our personal worth as products of that heritage,

while retaining the right to re-evaluate what tradition has passed on to us [...] Similarly, the process of reconstruction should only be informed by genuine knowledge, something we can only acquire when we really listen to each other" (ibid.). At Thupelo, the notion of synergy is evocative of the attempts to create local, national and international[4] forms of belonging and understanding.

Another way of conceiving of synergy is offered by Lynn Hoffman who has written of Australian aborigines songlines as offering "a poetic example of the social construction of the self" (1992: 10). Hoffman explains that a person would be born into one of these songlines but would only know a section of it, and that knowledge of a particular songline was gained by going on periodic "walkabouts", "to meet with others living far away who knew a different stanza, so to speak" (ibid.). This notion of a walkabout being a means of connection is useful in considering a "walkabout" as it is used at Thupelo. For here it is primarily conceived of as a means of connection, of unifying the group and of redefining the purpose (and identity) of the workshop. This role of the walkabout was brought into action at the regional: when Anthony (committee member) saw the group breaking up, he explained to me that some people were in need of direction (14th October 2002), so he arranged for a friend who was a scientist to come and "lead" the walkabout. Anthony explained to the group that the point of the walk-about is to get "everyone talking to each other, to create dialogue, to ask questions. That while Jeff is an outsider, it is an opportunity to invite others into your workspace, it's a chance to see each other's work-in-progress" (15th October 2002). The walkabout was also used as a means of including me and consolidating my own role as a participant at the international workshop. Thus, the walkabout is meant to act as a means of sharing information, and by implication, also consolidating a group connectedness, even a shared identity.

However, these intentions are often hindered by the emphasis on role-playing, as a means to guide interactions at the workshop, even to engineer them. A "therapeutics of race" (Lasch-Quinn 2001: 62), has been deployed in the USA, which encouraged stereotyping for black and white people, and a similar dynamic can be seen to be occurring at the regional workshop. Lasch-Quinn observes, "for blacks this

[4] The international workshop was conceived as being an "African" workshop; only three participants (four including myself) were not from the continent, see Appendix.

consciousness involved freedom from psychological and emotional repression, mainly self-affirmation through the release of rage or another form of self-assertion. For whites, it meant freedom from the alleged psychological debilitation of their own racism" (ibid.: 132). This ideology served to reinforce the separation between the various members of the group, restricting communication out of a wish to be sensitive. I observed the following dialogue in my field notes during the regional walkabout:

> When it is Moya's turn to have the group come into his space, he said very little about his work and there was some awkwardness as people seemed to wonder what to ask. Peter starts by saying that the figures in one of his works look like Bushmen, and Moya explains that this was not the intention. Peter persists by saying that they look like rock paintings. In answering, Moya implies that the figures are black people.
> Sonya asks what Moya normally paints and Moya says that he normally uses pastels. Frankie asks whether Moya thinks of titles at all, to which Moya replies no.
> Norma asks "how do you know when you've done enough?" Sonya says "you have a good feel for colour", but that the figures are weak, suggesting that Moya has added them for a figurative element". Norma adds "don't you think that it is interesting enough without the figures?"
> Peter asks "do you want to paint black figures?" and Moya replies "sometimes". Peter persists with "Does your work not mean anything until you have figures in it?"
> Dawn says that his work is "intuitive and creative" and that she has "enjoyed watching your process".
> Marie says that Moya has "enriched the process".
> Jeff says that Moya has very different styles.
> Anthony says that Moya must not tighten up.
>
> Beth is working next to Moya, and so is next to speak in the walkabout. Beth starts by saying that she is painting "because I never paint" just as she always works alone. Beth comments about how great the creative energy is, and that she remembers Jill saying "do something that you don't normally do", and so I am doing abstract work here. My sculptures are very readable, anyone can read them. I didn't plan my first piece, quite proud of that, most of my work is intuitive, except for one that is from a photograph that I took of a wall. [...] I wanted to use colours that I didn't like, baby pinks and blues. This is irritating, but I am enjoying the newness. It is a privilege of having 8 hours a day to do this and not having to worry about everything else in life. [...] With one painting, I didn't know if it was finished, so repeated it and continued, went on".
> Beth also says that she likes works that are ugly.
> Norma says that Beth's work is "a journal of a process and I think that that is beautiful". (personal communication, 14th October 2002)

This extract not only exposes the entrenchment of expectations that Peter, (a white participant) has about black artists, it also provides evidence of the role of sensitivity training in negotiating interactions. In art therapy groups, sensitivity training is presented as consisting of cultural reflexivity (Ward 1999: 292), while Sally Western declares that "issues of difference, cultural diversity, prejudice and oppression" can all be dealt with during group art therapy, where "profound connections [can be] made between people with very different experiences" (ibid.) are also possible. The possibilities for such profound connections to be made through the privileging of emotional literacy are questionable in light of the walkabout at Thupelo. Emotive responses were encouraged on the understanding that this is inclusive. Advocates of sensitivity training would consider Moya being withdrawn as a consequence of cultural differentiation, his inability to connect with others, which needs to be encouraged out of him, can be done through "humanising" (Lasch-Quinn 2001: 137), or becoming emotionally literate. That this offers inclusivity and a way of realising interpersonal relationships. Beth draws on "workshop speak" to formulate her speech, embracing emotions that are conceived as being inclusive. For Moya, attending Thupelo was about gaining experience (personal communication), about becoming empowered as an artist through having the opportunity to experiment.[5] The final chapter will consider further the importance given to emotional literacy as it comes to be a way of privileging the individual; of being self-referential at the expense of achieving wider understanding.

During his opening speech at the international workshop, Lionel Davis spoke of "Thupelo being an opportunity for people to come together and share what they have in common, which is that they all want to make art" (23rd February 2003). However, this cohesiveness was not taken for granted during the workshops, and it was considered necessary to engineer a communal experience, similar in purpose to the walkabouts. Activities were thought to bring about communal belonging, even to realise a community. The clapping after someone's presentation during a slide presentation, was meant to be supportive, but it also formalised the discussions while also reducing their worth, making them a ritual rather than simply a means to communicate with each other. Describing her experience at Wasala Workshop in

[5] It is worth noting that five participants from the regional also attended the international workshop – including Beth, as mentioned earlier and Moya.

Egypt that took place soon after the international Thupelo workshop, Julia explained that there was no strict regime, that there were open discussions, not only facilitated ones (personal communication, 21st May 2003). Julia also spoke of the importance of informal events such as going to town in groups, which enabled people to interact in an informal way, "these travelling moments – talking and making connections [enabled] there to be an amazing solidarity and it was an amazing time" (ibid.). This asserts the possibility of a cohesiveness developing without the angst involved in enterprises drawing on sensitivity training.

Each workshop is considered to have its own atmosphere: "when we came face to face with a new person, image, idea or network [...] there was a sense of amazement, luck and risk" (Bardhan 2000: 93), a consequence of the supposed "synergy" present. During her opening speech for the regional workshop, Jill explained that "One can't prescribe what will happen, it is a small workshop – which will make it more intense and interactive. It has never been affiliated to any political party or religion etc. Your energy and creativity will prescribe the workshop [...] energy levels, rhythms and interactions" (12 October 2002). This notion of a unique collective identity, and the significance of articulating this, was important for Thupelo, and the most tangible means of doing this is to hold an exhibition. While all Triangle workshops that hold exhibitions seek to emphasise that what is being shown is work in progress, the purpose of the presentation is to engineer a collective experience, to make the synergy of the workshop tangible. Participants at the international workshop criticised the exhibition precisely because it was considered to be divorced from the workshop experience. This accounted for the "fiesta" at the site of the 2004 workshop, enabling the viewing of art made at the workshop to remain linked with the site, which is considered to be crucial to the workshop experience.

Thupelo offers itself as a safe space within which to experience, first hand, multicultural interaction and participate in the breaking down of social barriers. The ultimate aim is synergy, which would seemingly confirm the transcendence of barriers, but which is immediately undermined by the importance attributed to it being a safe space. That the workshop can be a safe place both in terms of art making and in encounters was embraced by Dawn, who declared that attending Thupelo was "such an opportunity", for experimenting with her art and for hearing Xhosa spoken.

That she was selected says much about the aims of breaking down barriers, the caution that is implicit in attempting this. A safe space is a policed space and therefore has implications for the degree to which barriers can be "transcended". Thupelo aims to not only enable participants to develop artistically, but also develop their "humanness", effecting or transcending "the personal values, beliefs and attitudes we hold [and which] affect the way in which we interact with others who are not only different, but who are also judged as 'less than'" (Sonn 1996: 6 – 7). To embrace interaction at Thupelo is conceived as being a way to transcend such prejudice. However, the idea of taking risks (whether this is with one's work or socially, by mixing with others) is often little more than a slogan that signifies conforming to aims of psychosocial intervention, which does little to actually transcend "comfort zones" (see chapter 7). The organisers of Wasla workshop in Egypt played down this issue of cultural exchanges. In fact the opposite was stipulated: "This is not about cultural exchange but about exchange between artists and art scenes" (Abouel Dahab quoted in Ramadan, 103: 2003), which avoids much of the anxiety experienced at Thupelo about achieving "synergy".

This section has considered the manifestation of and the possibilities for a shared, even a communal identity to be experienced at Thupelo. The means by which the importance of selfhood and sublimation, discussed in the previous section, can relate to the simultaneous privileging of community advocated by Thupelo has been shown to be problematic. The desire to create exposure and interaction between different South Africans, even to enable a new self to be negotiated in the "indefinite spaces between the past and the future, the old and the new, the European and the African, the white and the black" (Steyn 2001b: 116), appeals to Thupelo as a rite of passage, as well as Thupelo as a realisation of synergy, but is not as straight forward as the affirmative statements allow for. The desire to be able to accommodate or reconcile both sublimation, which entails a reification of selfhood, with synergy, a notion which also reifies difference, is premised on the ability to suppress the need for concrete engagement with others. Both ideals conform to the significance of assumed knowledge, rather than an emphasis on the discovering of knowledge about the self and the other.

Feminising Thupelo

Hal Foster writes of the "ethnographic turn in contemporary art" (1996: 184), in which a new ethnographer envy consumes many artists and critics (ibid.: 181). Foster explains that "the recent self-critique of anthropology renders it attractive, for it promises a reflexivity of the ethnographer at the center even as it preserves a romanticism of the other at the margins" (ibid.: 182). This ethnographic or horizontal trajectory concerns the confusion between identity and identification; Foster warns that "identity is not the same as identification, and the apparent simplification of the first should not be substituted for the actual complications of the second" (ibid.: 174). This concerns the perceived ability to empathise with others, and as has been discussed in chapter 1, women are considered to be particularly good at this. While it is important to note the sincerity with which certain women believe they have an affinity with the other, which comes to be articulated as "Africa" in the context to be discussed here, Foster explains that the vogue for "self-othering can flip into self-absorption, in which the project of an 'ethnographic self-fashioning' becomes the practice of a narcissistic self-refurbishing" (1996: 180). What is sought through an interest in the other is an acceptance of the self, and in the context to be discussed here, it is to account for female virtues and vulnerability.

Much criticism of the "universal sisterhood" position has centred on how it has capitalised on victimhood (Chow 2001: 170). A debate that raged in the late nineties between Susan Gubar and Robyn Wiegman has further shown up the entrenched defensive position of many white feminists, holding onto the "sentimental language of captivity, injury, defence, and healing" (Chow 2001: 172). Gubar believes that feminism has been threatened by "a number of developments in the eighties and nineties" that include on the one hand, "racialized identity politics", which "made the word women slim down to stand only for a very particularized kind of woman" (1998: 901). Wiegman took issue with Gubar's claim that "equality sought by feminism has been undermined by the 'diatribes' launched against white women by women of color, so much so that the 'politics of racial authenticity may be experienced as an attack on feminism's endorsement of all women's right to self-expression" (1999: 378). By couching feminism's political goal as a right not to freedom from domination but to liberal 'self-expression'" (ibid.), Gubar equates feminism with white women, producing both as victimised and endangered (ibid.). Rey Chow notes

that Gubar's text is filled with vocabulary of dis-ease such as "'maladies', 'infirmities', 'sickbed', 'ailment' and the like" (2001: 171). This emotionism has been drawn on by white feminist scholars, who "have been arguing for a point of subordination, a position of innocence and non-implication in systems of oppression" (Razack 1998: 169 - 170). Reducing the feminist struggle to one that simply demands recognition of emotional needs lacks the liberatory edge that the new interdisciplinary developments of intellectual enquiry have given to feminist criticism (see Chow 2001: 171).

Pauline Mottram, a white South African female art therapist, describes helping a black English man in art therapy, where both of them were getting in touch with their "African" identity. Mottram even felt that she had to liberate him from the confines of English culture, calling him "the black man with the white soul" while she was the "white woman with the black soul" (ibid.: 113). Their respective colours, mediated through the art therapy object, were considered to help the healing of both her own and her client's "experience[s] of cultural fracture" (ibid.: 116). As well as being oppressed/victims, some women consider that being in Africa, allows them to experience and explore the same characteristic in the commonly perceived dichotomies between North and South, male and female, mind and body; culture and nature, reason and emotion, and objectivity from subjectivity (Ware 1992: 237). Thupelo might also encourage this dichotomy, through the romantic yearnings of some female participants, thus impacting on the character of the workshops. By way of explaining this, it is necessary to consider the motivations of a few of the female participants at the two workshops.

A transference of empathy from black women to black men demands simplified stereotypes of women, who become synonymous with white women, while black people come to be synonymous with black men (see hooks 2000: 382). This transference allows for an abstracted affinity with all women to develop while physical contact is realised with black men, who manifest the "other" or "difference" that is desired through a quasi-anthropological interest. Tina participated in the international workshop, and embodied the confused ideals at play here. She was Australian with Greek parents, and considered her upbringing to be very conservative. Tina arrived a few days early, during which I spent some time with her. Tina spoke

openly of her fear of coming to South Africa, of the warnings she had been given while still in Australia, and of her impending vulnerability, not only because of being white, but also female. Tina simultaneously expressed excitement about seeing "beautiful people", by which she meant black people (and presumably coloured as we were in Woodstock), a view that was consolidated by her developing a close friendship with a black male participant at the workshop. Thupelo seemingly enabled Tina to realise these broader ideals, namely a universal female identity and affinity with black people.

It is by no means a coincidence that Tina drew on Greek myth in her work, in particular stories referring to strong women, which, she enacted in performance pieces. Myth can be conceived as being universal because it ignores material particularities. Susan Hogan has argued that such claims to power are largely symbolic (1997: 35), and draws on Angela Carter's harsh critique of the women's movement's fascination with mythic versions of women:

> If women allow themselves to be consoled for their culturally determined lack of access to the modes of intellectual debate by the invocation of hypothetical great goddesses, they are simply allowing themselves to be flattened [...] All mythic versions of women, from the myth of the redeeming purity of the virgin to that of the healing, reconciling mother, are consolatory nonsense [...] Myth deals with false universals, to dull the pain of particular circumstances. (Angela Carter 1979: 5)

This perceived intuitive power of women is assumed (see Prekel 1994), indeed it is considered disrespectful to question it. The simplification of female strength and suffering was challenged during Tina's slide show, when Tina faced criticism of a kind that she had not even faced at college. Indeed, she was the only artist who received such intense criticism from her slide presentation as well as the work that she was making at this workshop. During the slide show she presented photographs from performances that involved her sucking eggs naked in a variety of locations. During the talk, Tina sought to avoid answering questions explicitly, preferring to hint at her intentions in the series:

> Suzy asks her "what are you trying to say about life and death?"

> Tina – "the rotten eggs are about rotten things that people say, or it could have been life – eggs represent ovaries. Eggs are about potential life, but it's not life. Periods are the same as eggs, if they are not fertilised then they come out".
> Tina is further confronted about the eggs by Sebe and Suzy, and defends herself by saying "that it is very personal and that I don't often talk about this, that these performances are like a ritual, I do them because I have to do them, it's intuitive, I do them for me".
> Mary-Ann – are these your unfertilised eggs?
> Tina – Maybe. (personal communication, 9th February 2003)

Other participants were very curious to know more about the work that she was presenting during the slide presentation, to understand the reasons and motivations for making such art, and this was evidence of their desire for a serious engagement with the art Tina was making. However, it was interpreted as being threatening by Tina because she believed that her work was going to be shocking for South Africans, and that further explanations were not necessary (see next section also). The work that she made during the workshop was deliberately meant to shock, an expectation that she voiced to me. Tina hoped to present a performance piece at the opening, which was to be influenced by a woman she has seen on the journey to the workshop, who Tina believed was being abused by some men. Her wish to make work about the issue of violence against women in South Africa, backfired when other participants told her that she was not in a position to judge or to speak for South African women. Tina persisted in believing that the reason for this was that her work was too controversial for most of the artists at the workshop, rather than that her work was considered not to be sound. She later sought to clarify her position, declaring that it was her own experiences and reaction to being in South Africa that she was working with, her feeling of vulnerability as a female.[6] However, this is still to idealise the situation in South Africa, which other participants felt was unacceptable, for it is still laden with a desire to empathise with a universal idea of womanhood.

The ferocity of the criticism directed at Tina is the clearest example of a participant having misunderstood the importance of being able to offer substantive explanations about the connection that she had with her work. She did not realise that other artists were not simply satisfied with the presentation of controversial work but demanded to have a context and explanations for the work that she presented to them. However,

[6] Tina decided at the last minute not to perform this at the opening.

the fact that people reacted to it at all was evidence for Tina that she had successfully shocked and engaged them. Her belief that she did not need to have an intellectual engagement with her work, but an emotive one, seemed patronising towards the other participants. Her assumption that South African artists would not be aware of conceptual art was also apparent when she handed out booklets of the latest graduation show from her art college back in Australia.

Tina received support from Linda, another participant who was academically trained, but considered the ability to empathise with someone else as valid and important. Defending another female participant, Beth, a white South African, who had photographed residents (black and coloured) of a township she visited while compiling her portfolio for her degree in Fine Art. Linda argued that Beth should be understood as being a Third World artist, "who was not only identifying with the economic circumstances of her subjects [Beth spoke of dressing like her sitters, and feeling as poor as them], but was also sympathetic to their plight, and her work can be viewed as a voice of the oppressed" (2003: 6). Both Tina and Beth were deeply intimidated by the critical position taken by other participants about their work. What is of concern here is the belief in the right to waive criticism of your work, if you can prove that you have an emotional relationship with your subject. Linda was not excepted from this criticism, although being Indian, she was also accused of using exploitative images of black people in her work; for Linda, her trajectory was realised directly through her Christianity and belief that street vendors were closest to God, whom she photographed before painting their portraits onto canvas. These three artists considered empathy to be reason enough to engage with "others" in their work, thus, to be criticized for it, was felt as a personal rebuke.

Dawn participated at the regional workshop and was probably the least secure of the participants, anxiously seeking approval about what she was doing from the others. Participating at Thupelo was perceived by Dawn as a "great opportunity". I got the impression that it was daunting for her to be working alongside many other artists; but she found a way into working by writing, after which she felt able to start drawing using charcoal. The focusing theme for her work came to be patriarchy; during the walkabout Dawn said, "it is about becoming part of me and part of society, women struggling to get a presence. I come from a patriarchal family and in the work, the

male is walking away and the woman has a stronger presence, facing us and taking part" (personal communication, 15th October 2002). This concern with patriarchy is a theme that I found many white South African women to be dealing with in their artwork (see chapter 6). It seemingly enables a conflation of women as oppressed with the other as victim, "lock[ing both] into a hierarchy of suffering where the wretched can do little wrong" (Foster 1996: 203). Norma, another participant at the regional workshop, brought a set of "Goddess Cards" with her, a means of bringing people, particularly women, together.

These concerns with belonging to an imagined feminine global family (Mindry 2001: 1189) are claims that bypass or ignore material particularities. Both Thupelo workshops contained elements of both quasi-anthropology and quasi-psychology (after Foster 1996), that tap into concerns and interests articulated by women participants. The considered importance of seeking spontaneity and intuition, which some women believe themselves to be closer too, is conceived as being in opposition to intellectualism. How this objection to intellectualism impacted on the workshops I attended is the subject for the next section.

Anti-Intellectualism and Fear of the "Critical" in Critical Discussions

> *The thing is that the whites around the place all had university educations. But they refused to share their knowledge with us. They wanted us to be different, we wanted to have access to the same resources they did. That was the conflict. (Durant Sihlali recalling Polly Street, quoted in Powell 1995: 16).*

The last section considered some reactions to criticism, particularly as it affected some female participants at the two workshops. This section will consider in more detail reactions to criticism at both the regional and international workshops, necessary due to the considered importance of voicing opinions about each other's work. Hennie Groenewald explains that in many African languages there are no similar or equivalent concepts for "communication", and that intercultural communication needs new concepts that are familiar to all South Africans and will add new dimensions of meaning to contact and communication on an equal basis (1996: 20 – 21). As Groenewald suggests, *ubuntu*'s advocates consider the "total communication situation" (1996: 22), and this holistic approach is contradictory to the analytical and cognitive Western oriented theories (ibid.). As has been discussed in

chapter 2, I consider this approach detrimental to understanding substantial or material differences between people of different backgrounds and cultures. Key to this adulation of *ubuntu* is the implementation of a form of censorship that masks a deep suspicion of critical engagement, for being "inclusive" means to simplify difference, ignoring or emphasising it depending on the circumstances at hand. As has been suggested already, both the reifying and the denial of difference are subject to wishes of the most articulate (and white) participants. Such a line of reasoning acts to safeguard their social positions and entrenches a particular multicultural set up that allows for little engaged interaction, due to the emphasis on role-playing. This suggests a degree of laziness and complacency in these critics or censors, over the level of interaction and communication that they expected at a "multicultural" workshop. I argue that it also exposes a stereotyping of intellectualism as an academic practice, and confusion between the aim of inclusivity and the expectation that the workshop will be "challenging" for all participants.

While writing critically of the exclusiveness of the South African white intelligentsia, Mahmood Mamdani concedes that while "South Africa [...] had few institutions to nurture native intellectuals" (1999: 131), "a native intelligentsia" still existed, "but it was to be found mainly outside universities, in social movements or religious institutions. It functioned without institutional support" (ibid.). It has been assumed by many aiming to be inclusive in South Africa, that to be so necessarily involves the suppression or outright dismissal of intellectualism. However, Antonio Gramsci advocated the notion of the universal intellectual:

> It is essential to destroy the widespread prejudice that philosophy is a strange and difficult thing just because it is the specific intellectual activity of a particular category of specialists or of professional and systematic philosophers. It must first be shown that all men are 'philosophers', by defining the limits and characteristics of the 'spontaneous philosophy' which is proper to everybody. (quoted in Holub 1992: 169)

If we can accept that all people are thinking individuals, then what needs to be clarified is how some of the conceptions of the world that people have are going to support the status quo. Renate Holub suggests that it is the role of "critical intellectuals" to address the political content of conceptions of the world, by making people aware of the non-neutrality of their ways of thinking, by raising their

consciousness, that "all people can potentially become critical thinkers" (1992: 69 – 70); in sum, to make aware that all people are universal intellectuals. But fear of the intellectual as "disturber of the status quo" (Said 1994: x) (see also Sartre 1974) is evident at Thupelo. This is manifested in the reluctance to engage with intellectualism at Thupelo workshops, which is couched within a (defensive) belief that to suppress intellectualism is to be inclusive, for intellectualism continues to be associated with white elitism and power.

Explanations about the workshops have drawn on language that privileges notions of the intuitive, spontaneous and unconscious; namely "energy", "freedom", "experimentation", "a celebration of togetherness and creative energy", "special moments" and "pure creativity" (Edwards 2005: 52). Thupelo, like the other workshops in the Triangle network, privileges notions of process; "the creative process is constituted by the dynamic interplay of characters, issues and events, within particular spaces that may differ at different moments" (Bardhan 2000: 131). While it is considered important to verbalise or articulate the experience or process of making to other participants, it is also the case that the notion of process often gets subsumed within a broader notion of the intuitive and the unconscious. This enables Catherine (international participant) to declare that she does not talk about her process. Catherine was very canny in exploiting the language offered by psychosocial intervention, using it effectively as a means to put distance between her and other participants, *through* this highly emotive therapeutic language. While there was much talk about "process", she made it clear that she would not talk about her process, or the content of her work. To say "I don't talk about my process" is not only very honest, but also an exact understanding of the purpose of such language, showing up the way *workshop speak* can be a defence while being advocated as a means to develop oneself. While this language is honest on one level, it also creates the illusion of being open and honest, when in fact it is a way of protecting oneself from criticism, using the formula readily available to create an illusion of intimacy (in the relationship one has with one's work). Furthermore, notions such as process come to be quite deliberately un-quantifiable.

Linda (a participant at the international workshop) wrote an academic essay after the workshop in which she attacks the kind of criticism levelled at various participants

during the workshop. It hinges on the assumption that inclusiveness is at odds with intellectualism, while also conflating intellectualism with academia. Linda embarked on a defence of all who were, or whose work was, criticised during the workshop: "For all the discussions regarding the Other, the critical discussions at Thupelo resulted in an othering of self-taught artists, who despite the relevance of the discussions at Thupelo, were forced into a voicelessness regarding these issues" (2003: 4). This is despite the reality that only two participants had been self-taught, which Linda equates with "previously disadvantaged" (ibid.: 3). One was white and vocal, the other was black, and so vocal that he led one half of the walkabout. Although criticising "the perpetuation of Western attitudes to African (Other) art by certain participants who still used Western standards as a benchmark in visual artist" (2003: 2), what is concerning about Linda's argument is that the alternative seems to be the patronising but safe environment found at the regional workshop. In such a setting, any line of questioning that became awkward was suppressed in order to avoid confrontation, as this was considered to create disharmony. This is endemic of confusion between not only intellectualism and academicism, but also intellectualism as a Western characteristic. This is presented as a concern over the need and wish to be respectful of others but also underlies a fear of confrontation, with criticism considered to be threatening, which people need protecting from (Furedi 2004b: 23); and has the danger of being paternalistic.

Donaldo Macedo writes: "the mundane call for language simplicity and clarity represents yet another mechanism to dismiss the complexity of theoretical issues, particularly if these theoretical constructs interrogate the prevailing dominant ideology" (1994: 8). This is complicated in South Africa by recognising the understandable suspicion of academia due to its (historical) status as a white stronghold, but it is a detrimental generalisation to conflate academia with intellectualism. bell hooks states that "intellectual work differs from academic work precisely because one does not need to undertake a formal course of study or strive for degrees to live the life of the mind" (1996b: 228). hooks continues: "the heart of intellectual work is critical engagement with ideas. While one reads, studies, and at times writes, a significant part of that work is spent in contemplation of reflection. Even though an exchange of ideas can and does take place in a communal context, there is necessarily a private solitary dimension to intellectual work" (ibid.: 228 –

229). Such private thoughts come to be made acceptable at such an environment as Thupelo, through their expression as emotional declarations, which demands a response based on empathy rather than intellect (see chapter 7 for a more detailed consideration of this), and which is meant to bring about synergy.

Colin Richards observes that standard South African art books such as Williamson (1989) and Williamson and Jamal (1996) are not critical in their engagement with South African art (2000: 75), offering instead affirmative praise, and this also appears to be the position of Thupelo. Thinking about Thupelo, Richards has written; "For all its bracing (re)visionary rhetoric, there is here a perhaps benign anti-intellectualism, an anti-academicism, which tends to auger ill for the development of criticality and critical writing. Criticality at this register must be one of the enabling conditions for the production of art as well as challenging intellectual work" (2000: 79). Richards states that he wants to address this "hostility to criticism" (ibid.), and the failure to acknowledge that criticism too is production, that it too is a process" (ibid.). Moreover, this denial of criticism can contribute to the "forced cultural infantilism" (Richards 2000: 78, after Koloane 1995: 262) that Thupelo has, historically, sought to address. Yet when I described the critical orientation of this year's international workshop to David Koloane, he despaired and said that the intention of Thupelo was to get away from the academic predominance of art-making and analysis, that academia just intimidates certain artists and they don't gain anything from the workshop (interview 6th May 2003). This conflation of intellectualism and academia is problematic and dismissive of intellectualism as a means to question and challenge conventions. Elsewhere Koloane writes: "Artistic discourse on the whole is based on abstract thought processes rather than visual symbols. It is also largely due to inequality per se that the possibility of dialogue between black and white artists is reduced. It is not surprising that most black artists suffer an acute sense of inadequacy before their white counterpart" (2000b: 71). This resembles the concerns expressed by Linda, but it also marginalizes the importance of sensuous engagement with materials at Thupelo, and the potential this has for focusing discussion and generating intellectual debate. If this is marginalized, the alternative seems to be the bizarre idealistic understanding of art offered by Leo Tolstoy and taken up by some abstract expressionists.

David Craven considers abstract expressionism, at its best, to signify not only the social wholeness and improvisation embodied in artisanal traditions, both Western and non-Western, but also as an implicit affirmation of what Barnett Newman explicitly advocated – the anarchist belief in natural spontaneity (2000: 251). However, to the extent that it is based on a faith in socially unmediated, or 'direct' art [...] it was precisely the populist assumptions intrinsic to the theories of the Abstract Expressionists that ultimately led to a certain naivety about the way society at large would 'naturally' interpret these hardly naïve artworks" (Craven 1999: 162). To be naturally spontaneous was believed to produce sublime art, and it was people who were freed from society's prejudices who could 'naturally' understand sublime art, for society was considered to be standing in the way of this presumed elemental understanding. The anarchist answer was thus to call for the immediate end of all states so as to eliminate these occlusions to 'natural' and spontaneous development (ibid.: 163). Writing in 1897 Leo Tolstoy decreed that "artistic activity should become accessible to every simple person", that the art of the future "will require clarity, simplicity and brevity" (1995: 152). Tolstoy's idealisation of the oppressed popular classes ultimately led from a commiseration with their history to an "ahistorical adulation of them as they were" (Craven 1999: 163). Tolstoy artificially limited the discussion of humanity's intellectual potential to what seemed the natural abilities of the peasantry; (ibid.: 168). This is similar to the fear of intellectualism at Thupelo, where Tolstoy's peasantry has been substituted with black participants.

Zakhe, a black artist who used to be a miner but is now a professional artist, was criticised for not "taking ownership" of the images that he was using to portray other black miners. During Zakhe's slide presentation, Suzy who led the criticism, was believed by other participants to be acting far too harshly, but there seemed to be a great deal of misunderstanding as to what she was questioning. People thought she was criticising Zakhe's ability to paint, but she was asking Zakhe to think about the materials he was working with. Zakhe takes pictures from newspapers of miners and copies them, sometimes adding certain details. In the painting that Suzy referred to in particular, Zakhe had used a photo taken at a certain angle, which meant that the miner's coat dominated the frame. Zakhe then added a work permit in the corner of the frame, which then became the title of the painting. Suzy was questioning why he did not think more about the coat, as this was the main feature of the painting, and

asking him about his engagement with the process of art making and the materials as well as the subject he was dealing with. People defended their confusion by accusing Suzy of being too Western or academically oriented, that she was at fault for not being able to engage with the experience of being a miner. The fact that Zakhe would not have been exposed to this kind of criticism before is more indicative of the expectations of others. Some artists at Thupelo wanted to sympathise and have an affinity with others, rather than questioning them. Suzy was accused of telling Zakhe how to paint, so shocking was it for her to make a critical observation that went beyond the meaningless timid suggestions typical of the regional workshop and some international participants' observations. Zakhe had been painting in this way for a while, articulating that he was drawing attention to the experience of miners (personal communication 16th September 2002); at Thupelo, he was being asked to think about a different aspect of his work.

This issue of ownership, of empowerment through connection with one's work, was and remains critical to Thupelo's premise of making art that is true to oneself (see chapter 3). But when this issue was raised at the workshop, it was considered to be interrogative and insensitive to educational and cultural differences. This is a result of an over zealous appeal to cultural sensitivity rather than a wish to adhere to artistic development (see above). Suzy was also provoked into asking about this relationship during Moya's section of the walkabout, when she again brought up this issue of needing to take ownership of the work that he makes. Moya had been explaining that he was just experimenting, to which:

> Suzy tells Moya that he can't hide behind "experimenting", that "you need to take responsibility for the work that you are making". Suzy continues, "you must not be innocent – that choices are important".
> Abdel asks about the relationship between the figure and the tool, asking "can you tell us about it?" But Moya repeats again that he is experimenting.
> Daniel – "Aren't we trying to dictate what we want (it to be about)?"
> Linda – "I have my own relationship with the work". (personal communication 12th February 2003)

This brief section of dialogue deals with a number of points, one is that *workshop speak* is not satisfactory for some participants, who object that words such as "spontaneity", "experimenting" and "intuitive" are used by other artists to hide

behind. This is very ironic that experimentation and the working through of processes were in fact being hidden behind the very vocabulary advocated at the workshop. But others seemed to be satisfied with the explanations that Moya offered, and felt that any dissatisfaction with the language he used was a result of trying to apply academic standards to Thupelo. That "experimenting" was not considered to be an adequate means to engage with why an artist is making particular work, threatened to take the discussion beyond the "innocent" and complacent belief that words such as experimenting were adequate explanations for what artists are gaining from the experience. This is not a criticism of Moya, but the experience he had attending Thupelo was not very different from much of his experience as an art student and as a professional artist. This is because he was not being asked to do anything different, for the word, *experiment*, is generally considered virtuous, one which Moya will have been accustomed to using in relation to his work. For Thupelo to be offering Moya something different, for it to be a different experience, the opportunity to talk (and consequently think) about his work differently should have been welcomed. That this was interpreted as a threat, is evidence of the need among many participants to have a safe sterile experience, using *workshop speak* as a means to do so. This limits the intention of Thupelo as a place to think or understand your work in a new way.

As has been suggested above, therapeutic declarations are considered to be an appropriate way to engage with others and to share insights into each others' working process. Many artists deployed such notions to articulate their work in relation to themselves, but also to deny this relationship. Abdel (international participant) is a good example of this, because he started his two presentations (at the workshop and when we came back to Cape Town) by saying that he used to do very personal work and that his painting portrayed how he felt at the time: "My work is my work, that is the process". This presentation had the potential to be defensive, anticipating criticism of his work. Many participants dismissed this defence, and Abdel was criticised for being too distant and sheltered from the work that he was making about war. (Abdel openly admitted to never having experienced war during his upbringing in Cairo).

During his slide presentation Abdel explained: I'm interested in what war means for children – that retaliation is often justified on the grounds that you killed our children.
Tina – I can relate to it, there was a war in Greece and our mother was so scared for us. But I wonder if other people can relate to it.
Abdel – my work is looking at what the media do with collective memory – that footage used for movies is being used as footage on news. I'm not trying to make statements about war – that it is about the representation of war in the media – (one-sided bias etc) and the irony of this.
Mary-Ann – do you need to experience war to be able to make art about it?
Hanan – you need to be more documentative.
Philippe – what happens to women and children in war?
Suzy – it is good for an artist to be involved in what they are working with?
Abdel – (justifies himself by saying) I have been doing this for 4 months and I have a long way to go.
Catherine – you have a special voice. (personal communication, 15th February 2003)

That Abdel was seen to be playing with the idea of war was problematic for many, and his work was considered to be shallow, yet in more academic environments, his work was praised: "the fluidity and comfort with which [Abdel] juxtaposes disparate iconographic and stylistic references directly relate to the transnationality of his own experience" (Meier 2003: 38). It was among other artists at Thupelo that his position and experience to be able to make the work that he does was questioned. It was the personal experiences of, say Congolese participant, Philippe that enabled him to challenge Abdel's use of war images; moreover, this was possible *because* it was not an academic environment but an informal workshop. This dialogue also shows up the inappropriateness of *workshop speak* or "discourse sanitation" (Macedo 1994: 4) by those who tried to be supportive and calming. Catherine used an affirmative statement to attempt to recover a sanitized form of synergy, but was seen as awkward in relation to the more analytical comments from others.

Although certain artists were really shaken by the unexpected severity of the questioning, I would argue that the workshop actually did what Thupelo intended to do – to make artists think about why they make the work that they do; and although there were many academically trained artists there, I would suggest that these kind of questions did not demand an academic knowledge, but provoked artists to think and to understand more about what they make. This was to adhere to Thupelo's legacy; to know why one paints the way that one does. This is far more empowering than

talking about growth and challenges, for such therapeutic diction does little, ironically, to move participants away from this safe interaction so that growth and challenges and empowerment can actually occur. The critical questioning, witnessed at the international workshop needs to be recognised as being different from both the academic world and the therapeutic and rainbow-ist world of much community enterprise. It could be argued that both are two sides of the same coin of white interests and control, and it is a fear of upsetting the status quo that makes people daunted by the idea of criticism. How people are to be empowered needs to be controlled or contained within certain boundaries established by those with knowledge and power to decree what others should know. The desire for anti-intellectualism is a desire for naivety, to dismiss an intellectual engagement with art making as being academic and hierarchical is not simply a confusion of academia and intellectualism, but a concern for maintaining difference.

To conclude, I will draw on a critic from the third Triangle workshop in New York:

> It always creates a deep impression on me to be in the presence of artists open to criticism. It's not easy to take criticism. And that openness shows up not only in the end, in the quality of the work, but in the characters of the artists as human beings. The presence of such personalities, and the experience of art as complex and refined as this, poses a challenge to the critic. Can the criticism be as good as the art? I think it can – if it demonstrates serious looking, and for that, a good grasp of the level is needed – neither the hair-splitting of a self-indulgent "connoisseur", not the babbling of a so-called post-modernist. (Tatransky, Guest Critic, 1985)

Academic and workshop speak can both be fronts that seek to make up for the lack of engaged dialogue and exchange of ideas. The irony is that far from creating a black middle-class, of which Peffer considers Johannesburg Thupelo to have achieved (2002), the anti-intellectual approach of the current Thupelo workshops has perpetuated the "forced cultural infantilism" so derided by Koloane (1995: 262). The anti-intellectualism evident at Thupelo is a desire for naivety, to dismiss an intellectual engagement with art making as being academic and hierarchical is not simply a confused of conflation of academia and intellectualism, but is also a concern for maintaining difference. Artists as ethnographers (Foster 1996) are seemingly able to "take up the guises of cultural semiologist and contextual fieldworker, they can continue and condemn critical theory, they can relativize and recenter the subject, all

at the same time" (ibid.: 183). However, this ideal can lead to "a reductive over-identification with the other" (ibid.: 203). Robbins' wish to reclaim cosmopolitanism would seem to offer a way of conceiving of difference, and also worldliness without the need for "oscillating between a vague spiritualism and a technocratic positivism" (Foster 2996: 183) so evident at Thupelo. Without an engaged consideration of what intellectualism can offer, whether in Cape Town, nationally or internationally, the alternative would seem to be the perpetuation of stereotypes; where difference is merely confirmed, consolidated and reasserted.

Conclusion

Thupelo strives to be a multicultural event, and as such it needs to have a way of bringing participants together. I would like to suggest that Thupelo's emphasis on process and engaging with other's processes offers a means to forming a cohesiveness, or human foldedness (Sanders 2002: 11). But anxieties about "growth", cultural sensitivity and inclusivity hinder the possibility for this to occur. Thupelo allows many participants to dabble with a particular set of ideals without losing certain (privileges) and access to other, perhaps more exclusive networks. It satisfies liberal claims and interests, but fleetingly, for there are no serious compromises needed; this keeps everyone "safe" as there are no risks taken due to the therapeutic and censored forms of discussion. The denial of intellectual discussions is not respectful to cultural differences but compels the gap between different groups to remain intact, and ignores the historical role of Thupelo (and the intellectual) as challenging the status quo. The attitudes that have been recorded in this chapter have the potential to jeopardise the work achieved by the pioneers and founding participants of the early Thupelo workshops; namely to rid the art world (and society more generally) of patronising attitudes towards what black artists are capable of making.

The irony is that Thupelo has in place, the ability to overcome such prejudice through providing the opportunity to think about the work that one makes, why one makes it, and what one can do differently. Moreover, this gives substance to the claims that Thupelo *can* be about personal or holistic growth; but it can only be so, if it takes notions such as "challenge" and "awakening" seriously, and their coming into being through uncensored interactions. Donald Schon offers a useful way of joining

together the apparently contradictory notions of making and thinking, which caused such tensions at Thupelo. Schon has written extensively on thinking and its relationship to doing, coining the phrase, "reflection-in-action" (1991: ix). Schon details the way the professional works: "he does not keep means and ends separate, but defines them interactively as he frames a problematic situation. He does not separate thinking from doing, ratiocinating his way to a decision which he must later convert to action. Because his experimenting is a kind of action, implementation is built into his inquiry" (1991: 68). This description is also very useful in conceiving how someone engaging in making art at Thupelo might work. Schon is not satisfied with how "complaints about the elitism or obscurantism of the universities tend to be associated with a mystique of practical competence". Adding that when people use terms such as "art" and "intuition", they usually intend to terminate discussion rather than to open it up (ibid.: vii). Schon concludes that the dilemma of rigor or relevance may be dissolved if we can develop an epistemology of practice which places technical problem solving within a broader context of reflective inquiry, that shows how reflection-in-action may be rigorous in its own right (ibid.: 69). An example of the success of this rigorous inquiry comes from Nolele, a student at Michaelis School of Fine Art, who had attended the 2001 International Thupelo workshop, and told me how the experience had enabled her to have the confidence to make different work, work that defied expectations of what she should be making, even by her tutors at Michaelis (personal communication, June 2002). It is this recognition that is also expressed by two participants of the international workshop:

> For me visual art is a vital if not one of the fundamental human activities that sustains human relations. Thupelo as a forum where artists from all walks of life gather and interact has been and I hope it will be a space where new levels of understanding and insights could be achieved for a better society. (Sebe, artist statement, personal communication, 21st February 2003)

> It was a great experience to participate in this workshop, what interested me most is the way the participants use their ideas. The art pieces I saw is something I have never seen before and by interacting and working in the same space gave me the chance to learn how to use different medias. I do drawing and this is just my independent language. (Charles, artist statement, personal communication, 21st February 2003)

There were a number of participants (black and white) who did not share the therapeutic agenda of the organisers, particularly at the international workshop. Many black participants, particularly South African, wanted to extend their experiences of making art; Moya, who some understood to be vulnerable to criticism, spoke of wanting to be invited next time (artist statement, 2003). However, while these practical interests are extremely important to note, they have not impacted on the interpretations and aims of the organisers. The emotional justifications were marginalized somewhat by the more critical engagement at the international workshop, its significance being over-shadowed by a number of artists who wanted to discuss art and how to improve their art-making. But the reassurance and guidance that psychosocial intervention offers were competing for recognition, and will continue to do so, so long as psychosocial intervention guides the selection of participants. Sublimation and synergy are both sanitized ideals that have little to do with the realising of a grounded multicultural community. For restrictions on intellectual debate and analysis and the moral demands for personal growth all hinder the possibilities for a cosmopolitanism to develop. In a similar vain, the following chapter will consider Greatmore Art Studios, during a year of great tensions, where its role as a professional art studio complex was entangled with desires for it to take on the work of an NGO.

Chapter 5: Greatmore Art Studios: Managing Empowerment

Introduction

This chapter is concerned with the fantasy of building a sanitized multicultural community for artists, which can be framed within ideals characteristic of nongovernmental organisations (NGOs), and whether this can be achieved in practice. NGOs work to identify and lay claims to certain virtuous categories for intervention (Mindry 2001: 1206), intervention being understood as synonymous with empowerment. The ability to exploit this intervention, rendering this liberal enterprise defunct is perhaps understood by the Minogue Paradox, as articulated by John Comaroff. The Minogue Paradox raises a fundamental challenge: how to explain the exquisite counterpoint of legitimacy and limitation, of regulation and resistance, of power and paralysis (Comaroff 2001: 54). This Foucauldian theorising of the practice of colonial and modernist politics is particularly apt for thinking about the seemingly contradictory practices at the heart of Greatmore; namely how to realise the desire to empower and make responsible artists/citizens and the supposed necessity for management in achieving this. The contradictory understanding of empowerment, as a means to becoming a rights bearing individual is considered in relation to the reality of ways in which artists have exploited the benevolence and resources that Greatmore have made available, instead, enacting their own understanding of empowerment through revolutionary means.

Greatmore Art Studios: History and Organisational Features

Greatmore Art Studios consists of two Victorian semi-detached one-storey houses in the first of Cape Town's southern suburbs, Woodstock. It was set up as a studio complex to provide low-cost studio spaces for mid-career artists living and working in Cape Town and is based on the models of the Bag Factory in Johannesburg and Gasworks in London, which are themselves formed out of the concept of the Thupelo workshops. Like the other two studio complexes, which are themselves contained within the larger Triangle Arts Trust (TAT), Greatmore seeks to add permanence to the workshop model. Characteristic features include the visiting artist residency programme that arranges three-month residencies, for mostly international artists to come and use one of three dedicated studios. The importance of a cross-section of local artists using the studios is another important characteristic, as is the emphasis on

mid-career artists (see introduction). The environment in the studio complex is meant to encourage the exchange of dialogue and experiences that was pioneered by the two-week long workshops and which are felt to benefit an artist's creativity. The aim is to create "interactive studios" while also having clearly defined bounded studios for individual use. There is also an understanding that Greatmore is flexible, and can and will adapt to shifting needs of artists in Cape Town. This means that while it maintains strong links with its sister studios in Johannesburg and London, it strives to adapt to the particular context of Cape Town.

Isky Gordon, a South African doctor had met an artist at The Bag Factory in Johannesburg, in the early 1990s, who had suggested the need for another Bag Factory and David Koloane had put him in touch with Robert Loder. Isky visited a regional Thupelo workshop on Robben Island in 1997, where Isky talked to Jill and the idea of a studio complex was formed. Artists associated with Thupelo had been working together in a temporary studio space in the centre of Cape Town, which Jill had rented and was used by artists on a pay-as-you-use-basis since 1996. Artists associated with Thupelo had been working together on a pay-as-you-use-basis since 1996 in a temporary studio space in the centre of Cape Town. The Thupelo committee used this studio space at Dorman Street for meetings, where they discussed issues concerning artists in Cape Town such as the need to exhibit work. The possibility was raised of setting up a studio-complex similar to the Bag Factory, which would offer Cape Town artists a permanent space to work and interact with other artists. Isky and Robert then set about looking for a location and in 1997 they bought the two semi-detached houses in Greatmore Street and renovated them into twelve studios, six of which became occupied in 1998, along with an office for an administrator and a small gallery. Two more studios were made three years later when space was brought from the T-shirt printing workshop that joins the back of Greatmore, making a total of fourteen studios, eleven of which are for artists living and working in Cape Town.

According to Greatmore's mission statement:

> Greatmore Studios responds to the needs of the Art community in Cape Town in providing individual studios within an interactive environment to a cross section

> of artists who have chosen art making as their career. It provides opportunities to the broader community to become aware of and understand visual arts through outreach and community work.
> The residency program facilitates cultural exchange and dialogue internationally and locally by bringing together artists from diverse cultural backgrounds in a working environment where the flow of ideas stimulates professionalism, creativity and productivity. (Greatmore, 2003a)

Another definition states that Greatmore "is inclusive and addresses needs of artists. It sustains a level of professionalism for mid-career artists in terms of the artists themselves and art as a way of life" (Minutes of meeting, 12th December 2002). When Greatmore was established a set of house rules was drawn up, which range from details about paying monthly rent on time, making "proper" use of the studios, no more than two people using a studio, reasonable consumption of electricity and no sleeping on the premises. These house rules are understood to be a way of offering and encouraging empowerment and managing one's autonomy in a communal environment. Developing responsibility and respect for yourself and others is realisable through the proper use of one's studio, as defined in the house rules; and becomes the definition of professionalism. There are very definite core behaviours that have to be adhered to by artists, from the outset; they must declare their enthusiasm for the idea of communication, interaction and experimentation in their application letter to Greatmore, and must guarantee their adherence to the house rules, signing a statement on arrival that they will do so.

Five trustees were appointed when Greatmore started: Robert Loder, Isky Gordon, Jill Trappler, David Koloane (the only black trustee) and Veronica Douglas, a South African lawyer who helped set Greatmore up as a registered Trust, but is not an active Trustee. Only one of the trustees is based in Cape Town, Jill, while Robert would keep in touch via email and would take on an advisory role when serious problems occurred, while Isky frequently visits from London and has had a more active role than Robert in the running of Greatmore and financially supporting many artists at Greatmore (see below). In a recent job description, it states that the "administrator works alone, with directives from the Management Committee and Trustees, while 'sister' studios in London and Johannesburg offer a support structure" (2002). Joachim, an artist at the Bag Factory, called TAT a "People Organisation", alerted me to the necessity of talking with the Trustees, for although they like to present Triangle

as an artists' network it is the Trustees who run it (personal communication 7th May 2003). The presentation of TAT in the latest brochure depicts images of happy artists, and consolidates the "self-deprecating" (Burnett 1995: 7) nature of the management, and their wish to remain behind a façade of people power. However, most serious decisions and raising of issues are done by a couple of trustees, Jill, Isky and to a lesser degree Robert with the administrator. The decisions they are engaged with often concern the behaviour of certain artists and the organising of activities that artists should be doing, and are shaped by the personal agendas of these four individuals, forming a management that, in effect, is white. But the "self-deprecating nature" of the management means that its dominance is obscured. Isky explained to me that he just facilitated the start of Greatmore; that it is now up to the people there to keep it running and to deal with issues that arise (6th July 2003). This is the myth of artists empowering themselves that Burnett and Joachim spoke of, but it is one that masks very real power relations and expectations of artists.

The role of the trustee, Jill, at Greatmore was to manage the day to day issues that the administrator felt inclined to refer to her, due to her proximity to the studios as she lived in Cape Town, in effect acting as the administrator's line manager, including interviewing people for this position. Until 2004, Jill worked voluntarily, (see chapter 2 and hooks 2000 for implications for this). Being also founder of Thupelo Cape Town, Jill's involvement has enabled her to direct the two intertwined organisations according to her own therapeutic interests, although it will be seen in the following chapter (chapter 6) that her interests get their most explicit opportunity to influence other people's work, when she held her own workshop. But at Greatmore, Jill was able to take on a nurturing role, chiefly through the influence she had on the administrator, recruiting those who shared her interest in empowering others. All three administrators to date have lacked formal qualifications; what is preferred is simply the wish to empower others (personal communication with Alex, 21st November 2004). This ensures that Greatmore is oriented along lines of self-help, characteristic of NGOs rather than professional artists' studios, following a missionary desire to do good, and evokes the perpetuation of "the mission position" (after Minty, see chapter 2), which reflects the desire to be empowering others while managing the means to this empowerment.

The first administrator at Greatmore was a white British woman, working temporarily in South Africa. Alex took over in 1999, working until 2004 when a white South African man took over the job. The administrator (during my time of research) was responsible for managing the studios, fundraising and running the residency programme. It is also the role of the administrator to take on administrative and fundraising duties for the Thupelo workshops, which is organised from the office at Greatmore, but is paid separately by funding raised for each workshop.

While working as administrator, Alex told me that her job was so much more than simply doing admin, for issues of "healing and empowerment" present at Greatmore, made the job "deeper than just any old job" (personal communication, July 2002). Alex was passionate about her job and the value of it, believing that it could enable others to achieve self-growth, which she considered herself to have achieved at Greatmore. Alex's end of year reports often included details of her own self-growth: "I recognised a pattern that needed changing within myself and asked for the help of Greatmore to show me onto a different level of growing and learning. Greatmore and I grow together, and the studios along with all the artists in them, have taught me a great deal about commitment and understanding" (2001, End of Year Report). This understanding of her role is similar to the notion of making art; both are considered to involve much more than simply making a living, for they are considered to involve, influence and impact on all of one, affecting one holistically. Thus it is impossible to differentiate between the professional and personal parts of herself. Alex felt that her job involved helping others become empowered, but all she could do is help facilitate the process by providing support and encouraging people to take responsibility for themselves. Individuals have to come to terms with their own development, but this can be encouraged if it takes place in a conducive environment, which, according to Alex, Greatmore is. For Alex, a key enabling feature of Greatmore is to encourage artists to take responsibility for decisions that they make, and the consequences of those decisions – this is empowerment.

The difficulty of this took its toll on the administrator at the time of research. Alex had to find a balance between helping and nurturing the artists at Greatmore, while also encouraging them to become responsible, self-motivated and independent artists (and citizens). She would seem to swing from extreme joy from the work that she

was doing, feeling great satisfaction from her job which was about helping and supporting artists, to extreme resentment, feeling that everyone was taking advantage of her, using and abusing her, and feeling trapped by the role that placed such demands on her. The ease with which some artists did take advantage of the position Alex identified herself as occupying, was also, according to her, a result of the social context they were all living and working in. As has been observed in the previous chapter, the dynamics of gender as well as race have an important ability to characterise an organisation. At Greatmore, white male involvement extended to having roles as Trustees but also as artists, while there seemed to be a near complete absence of black women in art institutions in Cape Town (a few more in Johannesburg). The main players on the ground were black men and white women. Many white women were in positions of administrators, organisers, and teachers and while not being directly NGOs for artists, they were in jobs that were about providing services to empower and help mainly black men (see chapter 2). Interaction between these two groups in liberal environments is starker because there is very little interaction generally in Cape Town.

Isky, trustee and joint founder of Greatmore, has a very clear belief in the importance of helping artists who have no resources and believed in "the power of art to change society, arts are the lungs of society, [and] poetry, music and colours make the world human. Art does something to you, it offers another perspective" (personal communication 6th July 2003). Isky believes that Greatmore should not be known primarily for having a gallery space, or become popular with tourists, for this might be detrimental to the artistic development of artists. This concerns the wish for Greatmore to be a transitory space where artists pass through having picked up skills and experiences that will enable them to be successful citizens and professionals. A way for Isky to combine his interests in art being "the lungs of society" with personal development seemed very much suited to his interest in supporting young artists working at Greatmore (see below). In common with other Trustees of Greatmore, there is a strong belief that Greatmore is serving very specific needs. David Koloane explains: "Greatmore is serving a great purpose. The needs in Cape Town are very different from Johannesburg. In Johannesburg there are more facilities – Artists Proof Studios and other organisations and technicons that are open to young artists. In Cape Town Greatmore is the only resource available to young artists" (personal

communication, 6th May 2003). Isky is clear that there are different and particular needs for an art studio complex in Cape Town, explaining that success at Greatmore is not about selling work or achieving fame, which is very different to the Bag Factory, the success and the identity of which are tied up with the central figures who work there, and who are extremely well established, nationally and internationally. Greatmore, in contrast is considered to be a stopping point on a journey that the artists go through, "success is seeing them produce great art, then move on" (ibid.).

Robert has great experience working with artists in Africa, and it is with him that the paradox and ambivalence of enforcing power is most evident (see trianglearts.org). This is in part because of the importance Robert gives to artists feeling that they have ownership of the project, whether this is a workshop or a permanent studio-complex (2000: 58). Yet Robert can also find satisfaction from acknowledging his role as a patron and supporter of particular artists (ibid.: 59). He conceded to me that the direction of Greatmore has been influenced by the interests of Jill, Isky and Alex, that they are products of a particular social context, which has meant that they are seeking to address certain issues related to notions of social responsibilities and the need for compassion. This is a concern that they are faced with as South Africans (personal communication 18th June 2003). Robert felt that, perhaps because of this, he had taken a back-seat at Greatmore, leaving Isky to make many decisions, but that ultimately this does not matter, Greatmore will carry on and exist without Isky and Alex. That Alex is there to keep Greatmore functioning, but her personal agendas are not that influential to the artist-led initiative, just as Isky believed that he himself was not involved in how Greatmore was run. It would also be fair to say that the need to balance pastoral care with enabling artists to empower themselves is also apparent at Gasworks, London, as described recently by Bruce Haines (2005: 39), and where Robert acts as manager.

There is a great desire to present Greatmore as being artist-led. This is a characteristic of TAT as a whole, and at Greatmore evidence of this takes the form of an artist committee, which also includes the administrator and a trustee. Officially the trustee acts as an observer, supposedly reducing the influence of the trustees in general at Greatmore, leaving the decision-making to the artist committee. Anthony, a white artist who was a Thupelo committee member, was also invited onto Greatmore's

committee despite not having a studio there, because Jill felt that he would be a great asset. Two artists who did have studios at Greatmore were also on the committee. Lizwi was a trustee for Thupelo and had attended the early Thupelo workshops in Johannesburg. As a mature black man, who could guide the younger artists at Greatmore, Lizwi's position was considered to be very important. The other committee member was the only artist at Greatmore who was identified as being coloured, Clint, who had a particularly active role in the artist residency programme, as the permanent occupant of the residency house (see below). Jill had no studio at Greatmore, but presented herself as having one (see greatmorearts.co.za) to promote an egalitarian impression, which resembles the talk of being both teacher and student at Thupelo (see chapter 4). The committee is there to run the day-to-day activities of Greatmore, meeting once a month and advance notice is given to artists as to when the following month's meeting will be held so that they can write to the committee with any requests. These may include requests to hold an exhibition in the gallery to recommending an artist for the residency programme. The gallery is also presented as being run by artists for artists, meaning that applications for shows were to be made to the committee, which in turn made decisions concerning requests to hold exhibitions. The committee were also to decide on applications for the residency programme, but choices in artists are often not brought to the attention of the committee, but made at short notice by one or two trustees, often with Alex's help in securing funding, as well as deciding on applications from local artists for permanent studios.

There are evident anxieties about the display of power and hierarchy, and about how to manage power in the organisation. Managing the aims and implementing them is considered to be an embarrassment, but also a necessity, for both the development of professional artists but also for the reputation of Greatmore more generally. However, the organisers see a way round their unease at enforcing authority through enabling a sense of ownership. Letting artists feel that they can make decisions; claiming that this is empowering and in turn brings about a feeling of ownership to the studio-complex. Just as art-making is believed to be egalitarian, there is an understanding that an organisation that exists because of the needs of artists demands to be artist-run, and along with playing down the role of administrators and trustees, the committee is considered to contribute to the diminished significance of hierarchy. Artists are encouraged to bring ideas to the committee that can grant approval, but

will be expected to instigate changes themselves. In practice, this does not happen very often, and changes are often the administrator's own suggestions. However, the presentation of power can also be taken to the other extreme. Important decisions are usually made by the three engaged trustees, and are usually publicly declared as being so by emphasising the seriousness of the decisions and action being taken. This is a deliberate strategy to remove responsibility from the committee as a way of asserting power that the artist committee would not impose over fellow artists, the position of Lizwi and Clint being particularly tenuous and vulnerable to accusation of "selling out" (see below).

Artists pay a monthly rent to Greatmore, which is to cover general running costs for the studio complex, but also to instil a sense of responsibility, and/or professionalism. Many permanent artists were able to have their rent paid for them by one of two funding organisations. The Association for Visual Arts (AVA), a local gallery in Cape Town, organised a fund for artists called the Artreach Fund, while the other source was called the Wigg Fund. For the majority of the year, there were only three permanent artists who were paying their own rent. Ben and Sonka made enough money through selling their paintings, while Amy had another job, and would often express surprise that other artists were not working. The AVA Artreach Fund was founded in the late 1980s in order to assist needy and deserving artists with their art-related needs (personal communication, Estelle Jacobs, 22nd November 2002). Applicants to the Artreach fund needed to write a detailed, itemized budget, a full description of why they need the funding and how it would be used as well as a CV. The Artreach fund would fund studio rent or materials for a period of three or six months and stipulated that recipients needed to write a report within a certain time of the award ending, describing what they had achieved during the period of funding. The fund has also helped sponsor art classes for children in Langa, a sculpture peace park, a street youth drawing project and art catalogues. There was an Artreach committee who decided the allocation of funds, which were mostly raised during the annual "Absolut Secret" event, co-sponsored by Absolut Vodka, where participating artists would each donate a miniature artwork which is then sold for R500 each, with all artists' signatures hidden from the buyers.

The Wigg fund provided funding for studio rent and materials and started when the shared Studio One began (see below). It was presented as a new source of funding for artists in Cape Town, before coming specifically for artists at Greatmore six months later – apart from anything this is because the Greatmore administrator had to process the applications. The source of the funding was kept anonymous from the artists and it was only at the end of my research there that I was able to speak to the funder and get his story. Isky, the Trustee, had funded the administrator's wages since Greatmore started, and when funding was found for the wages through the National Arts Council, Isky wanted the money to be made available to artists. The money came from the interest of a South African bank account that Isky wanted to keep in South Africa, although he lives in the UK.

Ed, a friend of Isky and neighbour of Greatmore, whom Isky had asked to look after the residency house (see below), also explained Isky's intentions to me. When I talked to Ed about the role Isky had, he explained that Isky doesn't want to be seen as a rich benefactor, although conceding that Isky openly buys paintings and it is known that he bought the house. But that Isky would rather have a friendly relationship with the artists, which Ed thinks he has achieved. This relationship is evidence, to Ed, of the sensitive and responsible position Isky has in relation to others who are less advantaged; "Isky is not doing it in the way that others would do it. Isky is doing it as a means of development" (personal communication 28th April 2003). Ed believes Isky is deeply concerned to help those who have been disadvantaged, and another way he helped, which also gave him immense satisfaction, was buying the work of particular artists at Greatmore. Isky would pay extremely high prices, which appear to be incredibly generous, but which has the potential to be damaging long term as other buyers struggle to meet the same prices (see Adrian below). This would also seem to work against the Greatmore principles of artists becoming self sufficient and empowered.

The Wigg Fund brought about a clash over how help should be given to artists. Alex believes it is not possible to become responsible through handouts, which is how she conceptualised the Wigg Fund, for she considered that recipients of support should be accountable to help they received. It should be noted that the possibility to be answerable to this was probably seen as complicated because the source of the fund

was to be kept anonymous. The main problem for Alex was that the Wigg Fund did not did "not even ask for a thank you!" let alone a detailed description of how artists had used the funds. Alex explained that not having to be answerable to anyone creates dependencies and complacency, both of which are the opposite of what is considered to be empowering. Later on in the year Alex was able to get changes made to the Wigg Fund, and recipients had to write a report detailing how they used the money and what they were able to achieve with it. This wish for artists to become responsible is what Alex (and Jill) believe differentiates Greatmore from NGOs with their complacency-inducing handouts. Alex believes that this is the kind of attitude that she is striving to get rid of, and to replace it with the virtue of people "trying to help themselves" (Mindry 2001: 1193).

These concerns are familiar to those of NGOs and those who fund them; to be empowering people is deemed a worthy cause, which becomes the core responsibility of the organisation. Being an environment for the development of professional artists and managing this development manifested itself as a paradox for those who ran Greatmore. This is due to the awareness that virtuous principles of empowerment and development are premised on a relationship that operates as a mode of power (Mindry 2001: 1189). How to run Greatmore as a professional artists' organisation while giving it a coherent identity and tangible outcomes was the context in which the management of Greatmore sort to negotiate these seemingly paradoxical aims.

Representation and Negotiating Belonging at Greatmore

The paradox of realising professionalism through a nurturing endeavour is related to the perceived necessity for balance, or negotiation, between the needs of both individual development and community empowerment. Throughout the literature for Greatmore there are words that conjure up both: "interact", "co-operation", "integrate" alongside notions of "vocation" and "professionalism". These notions are used to build a recognisable identity for Greatmore, and there is a strong wish for one that can be easily recognised by as many different parties outside the studios as possible. A tangible identity is often felt to be one that refers to healing and sharing and identity-forming in post apartheid South Africa (see chapter 2). While I was there, a promotional brochure was produced to give funders, visitors and other interested people, a graspable notion of what Greatmore was. It was perhaps also

meant as a means to clarify and define Greatmore for Greatmore itself, enabling there to be clearly identified aims that goes beyond simply stating that Greatmore is a space for professional artists to work. Besides stating that Greatmore is for professional artists, it also states that Greatmore "provides opportunities to a broader community to become aware of and understand visual arts through outreach, exhibitions and community work" (2002).

Terms such as "community" and "outreach" are believed to make Greatmore and art accessible to all. Community involvement is held to be as important as the development of responsible individuals, indeed it is only through contributing to both that benefits can be gained. The perceived importance of explaining Greatmore in terms that go beyond simply declaring it to be simply a professional studio complex, says much for the understanding of art in post apartheid South Africa. Art needs to be justified as doing good, of having a moralising agenda that needs to be reconciled with the need for self-determinism, indeed the two are entwined; an autonomous responsible individual is considered to be realised through working with others.

Fig. 5.1. Greatmore Art Studios

Significantly, the administrator, Alex believes that Greatmore is more community oriented than either the Bag Factory in Johannesburg or Gasworks in London, which for her explains how Greatmore is run and its distinctive character that seeks to address the particular needs of artists in Cape Town. The importance of negotiating the nurturing of an individual identity and a community one, was reflected in the use of the architectural space of the studio complex. Writing of his residency at the Bag Factory, Chris Cozier states:

> The corridor of the bag factory became the street. The open door became the veranda, the window, the back step. The creative space was then not behind a closed door or in a clearly demarcated private domain. (quoted in Xinisteris and Doepel 2001: 11).

Greatmore is just off the main road that runs through the southern suburbs. Greatmore Street is a narrow one-way street that had a secondary school opposite the studios until it closed in December 2002. Alex enjoyed the presence of the school, often mentioning it in funding reports as evidence of community involvement. The two houses have a shared front yard with space for 4-5 cars to park and a garden area that can act as a gathering space. The kitchen is the main communal space, where there is sometimes tea and coffee and notices are put up on the kitchen cupboards. The kitchen opens out into the courtyard, extending this communal area, where art can also be made. Alex's (administrator's) office had a window opening into the kitchen, the focus of Greatmore, which reflected the centrality of her position at Greatmore. A pay phone for artists to use was also in the kitchen, and its proximity to the administrator's office meant that she was likely to see artists making calls. It is in the kitchen that artists can be seen to be contributing to the well-being of Greatmore, thus declaring themselves to be responsible and professional, by washing-up, reading the notice board, making tea for a group of artists, or even having a conversation with other artists. Undertaken in the kitchen, they can be witnessed by the administrator, and taken in evidence of self-management and improvement, which are equated with professionalism.

Only four studios are accessed through house number 49 (although it actually has 5 studios in it). The other ten studios are accessed through house number 47, although there are only two studios in the main part of this house, and it also contains the

administrator's office and the kitchen. The kitchen door led out to 8 studios that surrounded a courtyard, running across the back of both houses. The toilet was also located outside the kitchen door; having been moved so as to make room for a computer room. House 47 is then the hub of Greatmore. Most of the artists who come to their studios pass through it, and since access to the toilet is also through 47 as well as the computer room, most artists will have contact with Alex. If Alex does not see an artist while she is there between 9.00am and 4.00pm, then questions would be asked about whether they are making proper use of their studio. Part of the presentation package that artists receive about Greatmore is that it is a great privilege to have a studio there, and this privilege must not be abused by neglecting to use one's studio. Some artists preferred to keep their studios private, to keep them as an autonomous space, compensating for this by being very sociable in shared spaces such as the kitchen or at shared lunches. If they failed to do this, doubts might be raised about how well they were taking on the characteristics of Greatmore.

Artists at Greatmore are expected to negotiate or balance the importance of practising and expressing their autonomy through the use of their studio space with an allegiance to the importance of interaction and sharing of ideas and resources. Negotiating the correct balance of these two ideals deems you to be a successful artist and pro-active participant in an idea of community. Being able to practice self-restraint and responsibility is in part apparent through the degree to which artists interact but also, simultaneously assert the bounded-ness of their studio. The brochure states that "the studio ethos is one of co-operation and exchange between artists, while interaction with the broader community is encouraged" (2002).

How these ideas were put into practice was played out very vividly through the manipulation of space at Greatmore. The need to discipline oneself came to be extremely marked through some parts of the studio complex, which provided a kind of physical manifestation of the principle of interaction and autonomy. One feature left over from the time when the two buildings were houses, is the number of inter-connecting doors in house number 49. Even when they were locked shut, noise and smells from the adjoining studio could still leak through. On one occasion this caused some embarrassment for Alex when the smells from one permanent studio leaked through into the studio of one of the visiting artists. Alex attempted to block out the

offensive odour with sticky tape over the cracks between the door and its frame; but other people's music was the main complaint. To be able to act considerately through containing noise and smells within one's studio was evidence of being a responsible individuated self. This tension between being responsible and the manifestation of this by having a contained studio space that goes with being a professional artist was coupled with the need for fluidity and interaction between artists. Combining both is considered to combat feelings of isolation and stagnation in an artist's development, while also developing bourgeois respectability (see chapter 3).

The importance of having a studio and personalising it are very apparent at Greatmore. Artists adopted many strategies to make the studio theirs, some brought in their own furniture, others borrowed tables and chairs from Greatmore and Jill. The importance attached to having a studio and the idea of it being entwined to your identity is critical to the ideology and the privilege attached to having one; moving it, changing it round and cleaning it are believed to reflect changes and developments in the artist as well. These uses conform to concerns over the responsible utilisation of the studios, and the processes of empowerment and success that will almost certainly follow. Clint was permitted a change of studio because he believed it would help him fell less stressed. The new studio was positioned at the back of Greatmore in contrast to his previous studio that was right by the front door and close to the public phone, which Clint was often left to answer. He manipulated his new studio to assert his current concerns and need to belong to Greatmore, decorating it, lining the floor with patterned blue lino; the different blues of which had become his trademark, the colours he used most often in his work. He also placed shelves in front of an inter-connecting door to strengthen the vulnerable boundary. Clint's new studio mirrored his own feeling of renewed strength at Greatmore. That the studio is a space within which changes to the self can and do happen conforms to ideals set out in Greatmore's own ethos.

Greatmore as Community

The notion of Woodstock as a multicultural community (see chapter 2) is appealing to Greatmore; it is an area in which neighbourhood schemes advocate regeneration (empowerment) and interaction (community). This understanding of Woodstock was very popular with artists wishing to embrace the "new" South Africa. One such artist

was Patricia (white, late forties). Being at Greatmore was about enabling herself to feel involved and active in the new society, by giving her access to black artists, for as she explained, her social circle was white, and so Patricia sought to realise an active role for herself at Greatmore, by instigating initiatives and activities that aimed to be inclusive. One of these involved organising an exhibition in gallery when none was currently planned. In preparing for this, Patricia had put up a notice:

> ARTISTS!!! Do you have anything to say about the world summit? (It is in Joburg and our leaders are trying to find a way to promote sustainable development this week). Do you have a piece of work to hang in the gallery for a mixed show this week.
> Something about peace, Development, Poverty, or the environment? Recycling, Africa, the Third World? Community, People, Responsibility, the African Renaissance, politics??? (Personal Communication, 29th August 2002)

This is an appeal to realising community, but seems forced, not least because of the paternalistic pedagogic role that Patricia took over informing artists of the World Summit on Sustainable Development and the familiar appropriation of virtuous words. Annelise Riles offers a detailed analysis of how NGO language is deliberately opaque and seemingly vacuous (1998: 388). Yet through this NGO language, Patricia was striving to bring community into being, relying on the ability to tap into other artists intuitively. Many artists did contribute to this informal group show, but the exhibition raised security concerns, and its compatibility with access as one artist's work was tampered with. This alerts us to the dilemma faced by Greatmore, that its gallery was not secure, yet its informality made it accessible. Other artists in Cape Town were not prepared to show there over security concerns (personal communication, Zwelethu 18th February 2005). Making the gallery, and Greatmore generally, accessible was always considered to be a good thing, but there were certainly concerns over professionalism, and the ability to treat artists and their work with respect. Later in the year, when Patricia held an exhibition at Greatmore, she sought to make the opening interactive and invited guests and members of the local community to tell stories to the guests. Patricia explained that she wanted local people to come to Greatmore and tell stories about the area and their experiences because most of the artists at Greatmore were from different communities (meaning black and white) and had little interaction with people in the local (coloured) area. The stories that were then told had a moralising, rainbow-ist orientation, focusing on

the need for understanding and unity within difference. The ideal of "community input", where community means simultaneously black, white and coloured, was rarely implemented practically, yet its popularity as an ideal persists.

There were occasions when notions of a "community spirit" was realised through a much more practical and engaged means. One particular exhibition opening organised by and showing the work of another artist at Greatmore, was able to achieve inclusiveness inherent in the ideal of community through very practical means. Other resident artists were asked to open their studios for the evening, thus making the opening an open studio event as well. It was also the only time when the two houses seemed joined, making use of the studio that had two entrances, accessible through the courtyard and through number 49. Food was served in this studio and both doors were open, creating both another area to congregate and a means to pass through to different parts of the studio-complex. In line with the formalities of putting on an exhibition, Lizzy had written a letter to the committee asking for permission to serve food and drink and play music at her opening. She stated the reasons for wanting to do this as follows:

> 1) I believe openings are times for celebration.
> 2) I believe feeding people and providing entertainment, encourages people to come to shows, who may not otherwise and any enticement is worthwhile in making art accessible.
> 3) For people who are invited (friends, family and neighbours), who wouldn't normally go to art shows, social occasions take the pressure of the expectations of others off them (people don't feel they have to talk about the art work). One of the sad things I have noticed about many of the more austere openings in Cape Town in that they alienate people from the work. By placing them in formal surroundings they often become 'passive spectators' rather than participants in the experience which is art. [...]
> 5) Anyone who wishes to view it in calm or isolated circumstances can always view it again over the following week. My guess is that having produced a warm hospitable, welcoming environment, people will want to come back. I also intend inviting lots of children and the more comfortable they feel the more likely they are to accept art as a wonderful, natural part of life in the future. (Personal communication, 28th June 2002)

This assertion of the importance of art being accessible to all is a passion that many share, but what is significant here is the way in which Lizzy was able to explain why she wanted to provide food and music in a clear and straightforward manner that does

not get bogged down with moralising agendas. It is also more descriptive than the popularly cited appeal that speaks of "needing to reach out to the community", with little in way of a plan for implementing this. This certainly required some reflection on the part of the author, but did not make it elitist or convoluted, which is so often used as a defence against critical engagement in attempts at initiating inclusivity. This event attracted many different people without feeling forced, and had an atmosphere that could be described as a *community spirit*, which is what all openings at Greatmore strive to create. I was aware of a very vivid form of interaction and openness that went along way to realising this ideal. This opening happened within the first two weeks of my arrival, seeming to make realisable the ideas that were articulated in papers that I had read about before I arrived in Cape Town.

A further indication that Greatmore had a spontaneous community feel were the shared lunches that were organised every weekday during the first month after I arrived. It was explained to me that a residency artist had started organising lunches, collecting contributions from those who could afford to contribute from the artists there that day, before going off to buy chips, avocados, tomatoes and bread from the local shops. Everyone would gather in the kitchen and courtyard to eat, there were often donuts brought by one current residency artist during this time. These gestures contributed to the general feeling of there being a more communal and shared feeling among the artists at Greatmore than I had experienced during my research at Gasworks. But this atmosphere was due to the abilities of some artists to instigate them, which while cutting to the core purpose of Greatmore, also generated resentments from some (often white) artists, that they were expected to pay for others' lunches. This discomfort with the idea of community and interaction, were to become more apparent and cause more unease during the year.

Outreach and Personal Development

Artists were not only encouraged and even expected to develop themselves as professionals through working closely with artists at Greatmore, but also through the work that they undertook outside. Carrying out projects with children, women and other virtuous groups (after Mindry 2001) came to be evidence of responsibility and in turn professionalism. Artists were encouraged to be conscientious, the assumption seeming to be that artists are often not engaged in South African society, and so this

relationship needs to be made more tangible. It is also considered to be outreach that enables the artists on the visiting residency programme (see below) to engage in the wider South African community and justify their privileged lifestyle. This is not only to be a means of interacting with South Africa's poor and disenfranchised, which will enrich their residency, for it is also a means by which participants on the programme, and resident artists can "give back". This mantra is often recalled as a means to explain the importance of doing outreach. Besides using one's position as a skilled artist to teach children or homeless people, "giving back" could also include a project that helps Greatmore, here "giving back" is returning the help and support given by Greatmore. It could involve giving a slide presentation of your previous work, one artist combined this with being particularly friendly and interested in other artists at Greatmore and satisfied Alex that he had executed his outreach. What is of concern is that the impact of outreach is not considered which is in line with the practice of psychosocial intervention. Rather, Greatmore privileges simplistic declarations of art as a means to realising well-being.

> The largest impact that we hope to make with our outreach program is with the youth who we hope to educate and inspire through this outreach work, creating avenues for people to explore the potentials of art and their own potential transformation, to nurture values in our youth that inspire them to self expression and creation and to encourage the young people growing up in South Africa to consider art as an essential part of life. (Funding Proposal 2003b)

Outreach aims to "conscientise" (Ramphele 1995: 64) people with the promise that art-making can develop the whole person, empowering those who are disempowered. Outreach comes to be a manifestation of pastoral care, which can even be described as "missionary outreach" (Magubane 2004: 72) and "evangelical outreach" (ibid.: 73). This alludes to the missionary like fervour to convert people to the alleged life-transforming potential of art-making. Outreach events are described as "gently guided", "informal gatherings", "inspiring", "process", while children visiting an exhibition where they might meet the artist are particularly interested in posing for photos, which then contribute to the images of happy people that are selected for the brochures, which are then deemed to be evidence of the success of outreach events (2002). Children who lived nearby would also come to Greatmore in the school holidays, when the administrator would provide them with paper, pens and pencils and suggests things for them to draw, giving encouragement when they brought their

drawings to her. Alex felt that they did not get much love at home, and wanted them to feel welcome at Greatmore. One holiday there was even a display of their work put up on the main notice board that was usually used to promote the current exhibition in the gallery. However, the management did also voice concerns over how empowerment was to be realised, believing that to do this involved encouraging those being reached out to, to become responsible. Becoming responsible was possible through combating "a culture of complacency" (personal communication, Alex, 5th August 2002), which was considered to be possible through a variety of means; from ensuring that only the most "disadvantaged" had travel costs paid for them, to expecting participants of a project to look after their own lunch (ibid.).

The concerns being expressed here are similar to those expressed over the role of the Wigg Fund. What is deemed to be wrong with a "culture of entitlement" is that it does not enable artists/youth to become self-empowered, but instead has the potential to create dependencies and certain expectations that it is the role of whites to help young black South Africans, which is understood to be perpetuating inequalities. This concern is perhaps the starkest form of racial differentiation to be acknowledged by the management of Greatmore. Greatmore made use of such discourses concerning self-help as a means of identifying themselves with a "critique of colonialism, especially missionary enterprises, that infantilised Africans/blacks and fostered dependent relationships between Africans and Europeans" (Mindry 2001: 1194). This awareness is considered to enable outreach to be used responsibly, and can be used as a means to help develop professionalism among the artists and those being reached out to. Yet, there were also occasions when outreach projects "created too much distraction for the smooth running of the studios" (Outreach Report, 2000). As were there other occasions when a clear distinction had to be enforced "in terms of Greatmore fulfilling it's functioning not as a Community Centre, but rather as Professional Art Studios" (ibid.). The administrator at the time of research explained that she would sometimes be reminded by the committee that Greatmore was for artists and not primarily outreach, that the committee had to "rein her in" sometimes when she was thinking of initiatives that would be inclusive. Thus, the balancing of therapeutic concerns with professional ones was constantly being negotiated at Greatmore.

The Residency Programme, Outreach and Personal Development

The aim of the residency programme is to "facilitate cultural exchange and dialogue internationally and locally by bringing together artists from diverse cultural backgrounds in a working environment where the flow of ideas stimulates progress, creativity and production. Visitors find it stimulating and productive working within a community of artists where new skills, networks and friendships are established" (Residency programme information pamphlet). As well participating in outreach projects as have been described above, artists are expected to produce a body of work to be exhibited in the gallery at Greatmore (or elsewhere). The visiting artist residency programme was set up to offer a more sustained form of interaction than was established at the workshops. Artists usually have to apply formally and might be self-funded, or supported by funds raised by the administrator specifically for this programme. These funds would normally be designated to artists from South Africa or other African countries and the South African National Lottery had recently started funding artists on this programme. Pro-Helvetia, the Swiss Arts Council had an arrangement with The Bag Factory and Greatmore, where they would recommend and fund two to three Swiss artists annually to participate on the residency programmes. Most residency artists stay in a house purchased by Isky in Observatory, and the residency house is regarded as important because it is anticipated that the artists will be able to bond more by living together and that this will have the consequence of making the experience of the residency more encompassing. Ideally three artists would arrive at the same time, and there was usually a welcome lunch at the start of a residency. Sometimes the lunch would happen after one or two artists had been there for a few weeks and then the lunch would be combined with a talk and visit to their studios, which also contributes to a fulfilling of outreach, and "giving back".

The artists who came on the international residency circuit are often surprised by the "community" orientation of Greatmore, and Pro Helvetia which sends one or two artists a year is part of the fashionable international residency circuit, with which TAT is also associated (personal communication with Ben, November 2002). Two American artists who had residencies while I was there were at great ease with the notion of community and the importance of outreach, which suggests a common understanding of empowerment parlance internationally; both however, were exceptions. Salvador arrived expecting to partake in such projects, bringing a large

portfolio containing details of his outreach work back in the States. Arthur invited students and recent graduates from CAP to show videos of his work and to hear him talk about being indigenous as a universal experience (22nd August 2002). This calls for an inclusive experience of empowerment that is similar to the use of *ubuntu*, and seemingly refers to a particular situation, yet is drawn on as a means to speak of an unlimited number of virtuous notions. Here notions of youth and indigenousness are called upon to give credibility to an outreach project.

However, one artist organised a project for artists at Greatmore, which was interesting because it fitted comfortably into the outreach ideal, and yet the artist intellectualised what would have otherwise been a simple cleaning-up project. This is different from many outreach projects, which would work in an opposite manner, simplifying any ideas or motives that shaped the projects. On a poster advertising the project to other artists at Greatmore, Ute wrote about the space in the courtyard at Greatmore, asking, "how can we refresh the perception of space around us?" and "asking about the function of the space (working, recreation, art space, stock etc)" (personal communication, 3rd November 2002). Many artists were not interested, and one who did join in, later left after complaining that this was just about cleaning. But this project was carried out to help Greatmore, and rather than explaining it through the moralising agenda of needing to give back, Ute took an approach which offered a more practical explanation than the rather foggy and reflexive reaction inherent in the phrase, "giving back". As I sought to show in chapter 4, a more engaged response is not necessarily elitist, and if anything, artists felt Ute's project to be beneath them. But the project was a way to do something for Greatmore ("giving back"), which involved an engagement with the materials around the site of Greatmore, thinking about their potential use for artists, and making a tidier working environment.

As at Thupelo, some artists are recommended for the residency programmes on the basis that they will develop as artists, but also personally (see chapter 4). One artist was invited to come from Botswana on the basis of recommendations from Patricia, who had participated at Thapong workshop, and had found a local participant, Nathan, to be very exciting, while Nathan had also been encouraged to attend the residency from Veryan, a white woman in Botswana who organises Thapong

workshops.[1] Veryan had thought that Nathan would benefit from the residency, that it would make him more responsible (personal communication with Alex, July 2002). But as we saw with similar motivations and decisions at Thupelo these wishes seldom become realised. Nathan distanced himself from the other artists staying at the residency house, and halfway through the residency, he moved to a Rastafarian camp in a township. Even so Alex managed to write positively about Nathan's residency for a report, stating "Nathan was also involved in outreach work in the Marcus Garvey Rastafarian Camp in Philippi, where he based himself during his stay in Cape Town" (End of Year Report 2002a). This means of perceiving positive outcomes from difficult behaviour is characteristic of psychosocial intervention, and will be further discussed below.

Behaviour and Expectations

Adrian was one of the first artists to get a studio at Greatmore. He was a very popular artist in Cape Town and nationally, and also appeared in group shows internationally. Adrian had attended the early Thupelo workshops when they were held in Johannesburg and had studied at CAP during the time when it had a reputation for producing radical and political artists. While being popular, it was widely known that Adrian was schizophrenic (Robert Loder had concerns over his pastoral care needs before Greatmore, see diary entry 1998), but this did not impede his reputation for being an exciting artist whom the white artworld enjoyed supporting. Adrian had been asked to leave Greatmore in 2001, after becoming angry when he was confronted about not contributing to an outreach event at Greatmore. Alex explained to me that Greatmore could not tolerate such behaviour, and was pleased that she had stood up to it when others were not so bothered by it (personal communication 2nd September 2002). She understood that this lack of concern for bad behaviour was itself evidence of the NGO type character that brought Greatmore discipline problems. Adrian was sectioned after being dismissed and about six months later, he wrote an apologetic letter to the Greatmore committee, asking to be given another chance, and it was decided to give him a studio again. In July of 2002, Alex and Jill felt that he was doing very well, and when a residency place came up at the Bag Factory at short notice, it was decided that Adrian should apply for it. Adrian wrote

[1] Thapong is a workshop that was initiated by TAT in Botswana, (see trianglearts.org).

an application letter by hand, explaining the good experiences he had had at Thupelo and Greatmore and how wonderful it would be to have an opportunity to work alongside the Bag Factory artists. Adrian's application was dismissed by the Bag Factory for not being professional enough, but Jill used her influential position as Trustee of Greatmore to persuade the Bag Factory committee that this was a great opportunity for Adrian. The Bag Factory agreed to the satisfaction of Alex and Jill, who both thought that Adrian was ready for this challenge but were concerned that he would need emotional support. When I suggested that I could visit the Bag Factory while Adrian was there, Jill thought this was just the kind of support Adrian would benefit from.

Adrian returned amid reports from the Bag Factory that he had not had a particularly successful residency. He was not thought to have made much effort with the work he made, having fallen in love (personal communication, Alex 25th October 2002). A few weeks after his return, he was involved in a fight with a prostitute at Greatmore, which disturbed the neighbours and he was immediately suspended for the rest of the year. The Trustees raised this sanction to a dismissal, and Adrian was told to vacate his studio. Soon after this, Adrian was again sectioned and later released, but became homeless. No galleries wanted anything to do with him, even though a few years ago they had courted him, and he started to harass tourists in St Georges Mall in the centre of Cape Town. The organisers at Greatmore wanted to help him, but when this was not possible (which meant when he was not manageable), he had to go, as he would not conform to the help they were giving him. Alex would waver between feeling a need to help Adrian and explaining that Greatmore was not a rehabilitation unit when he came to Greatmore, asking for help or access to his old studio. That Adrian was hospitalised after each time he was dismissed was not seen as coincidental by the management but was perceived as evidence of the need or purpose of Greatmore in providing mental stability to artists. Jill spoke of organising a studio at the hospital for Adrian, in the belief that Adrian needed to make art, but not at Greatmore. He was too much for them. Greatmore wanted to help artists but could not help extreme behaviour. Both Jill and Alex had decided that he was ready to go to the Bag Factory and interpreted its failure as a misreading on their part of the extent of Adrian's progress (personal communication, Alex 12th November 2002).

The house rules were re-asserted when Adrian was dismissed, and there is a certain amount of irony at play here. Greatmore stipulated that there were to be no drugs or alcohol consumed on the premises when at Thupelo using them was almost expected, if not overtly encouraged. Likewise, sleeping amid one's work is also expected at Thupelo but forbidden at Greatmore (see chapter 4). However, the discrepancy makes sense if one remembers that this kind of behaviour, including falling in love, could be contained at Thupelo in its role as a rite of passage, but not on a long-term basis at Greatmore, where it was considered to be at odds with the ethos of a professional studio complex.

During my time at Greatmore, an important priority for the artist committee was to encourage more women to apply for studios at Greatmore. Correcting the gender imbalance was held to be a higher priority than encouraging specifically black women to apply. One black female artist, Zodwa, applied to both the regional Thupelo workshop and to Greatmore for a studio, but her application was turned down on the basis that she was not professional enough. Examples given to me were that she lost her application form on the journey to Greatmore, that she would often turn up when Alex was away, and that she would bring her young child with her. Zodwa had graduated from CAP in the 1980s, had subsequently taught there, and had also worked in a shared studio space else where in Cape Town, but which was unsatisfactory due to a shortage of space. Even with this experience, Zodwa seemed to have to prove herself in a way that black male applicants did not have to, being rejected for behaviour that black men got away with displaying (see following section), and which possibly even seemed endearing in them. Supporting or helping a black woman was seen as being more burdensome than helping a black man. During this same time, a refugee from the Congo, Maurice was chosen for both the regional Thupelo workshop and for a studio at Greatmore, which raises question about the perceived virtues of refugees. Who is appealing and chosen for empowerment projects concerns perceived hierarchies of virtue (after Mindry 2001). The only other black woman to come to Greatmore regularly, was the housekeeper, Sindi; the term "housekeeper" seemingly being more empowering than "domestic worker", the job in which many black women were employed as in white suburbs.

Ben, a young white artist, trained at Stellenbosch (a very conservative university by South African standards) best conformed to the ideals established by the workshops and adapted to the studio-complexes while I was at Greatmore. He was very busy, worked regular hours, was friendly, although perceptions varied about how well he interacted with the other artists; Alex thought he interacted much better than many white artists who have had studios at Greatmore, while some artists felt that he kept himself quite separate. Ben was not interested in moralistic displays of sharing and interaction such as dominate Greatmore. He did not think that he would stay at Greatmore for long, but that it was fine for the moment while he was at this particular stage in his career (personal communication 27th November 2002). As such, he conforms to the ideals set out by Isky and accepted generally at Greatmore, that Greatmore is a stage on a journey. The independence and empowerment that Ben displayed were not often realised because a number of artists became dependent on the resources available to them at Greatmore. It is ironic that Ben, an Afrikaans artist should be the best example of a beneficiary of the ideal of establishing an independent career as an artist. But it also raises questions as to why it is so much harder for black artists to achieve the same, and why they are less able to become independent (see Blac report 2003), in spite of empowering initiatives such as those carried out at Greatmore. Who can be considered to be worthwhile beneficiaries of intervention are based on ideals of who it is virtuous to help, and is also the concern of the final section of this chapter.

Critical Interventions: Greatmore as a Gateway

What made the contradictory ideals of empowering (NGO-work) and running a professional artists' studio complex most stark was events that took place in mid 2002. Near the beginning of 2002, a written notice was given to the artists stating that:

> Due to the needs of the Cape Town art community, we are reassessing the nature of Greatmore and are considering providing a shared studio for four artists. These will be four younger artists who will share a studio and will gain enormously through being part of studios where professional artists are working. Part of being at Greatmore is sharing and this will allow an opportunity for more established artists to put something back to the art community. (Notice to all artists, January 2002b)

This notice began by reminding artists that they have a responsibility to make full use of their studios, but contains much that Greatmore, or those who run it, believe in very strongly. This includes its ability to change and adapt to changing needs in the local art community, the importance of fluidity of information and experience between artists and the worth of outreach, of "giving back", which fits comfortably into general ideals that are particularly popular in South Africa. No one in South Africa can easily escape rhetoric about "communities", "giving back" and "youth" which are all popularly recognised as virtuous words as has been discussed, and people and organisations that use such words are therefore helping in a good and noble cause. What is also significant is the way that the notion, as well as the physical manifestation of interaction lends itself so well to the idea of community, and to the possibilities of realising community, for a community relies on interaction. But what is important for now is to see how this ideal or aim was played out, and how the physical layout of Greatmore reflects the possibility for interaction and community to be possible, but also the vulnerability of these liberal endeavours, for empowerment can be expressed in unexpected ways.

In May 2002 the largest studio at Greatmore was turned into a shared space for the use of four young graduates of CAP. The decision to do this was based on the concern that they should have a chance to work alongside professional artists to see if they wanted to make art their vocation. Anthony (committee member) explained the context in which "Studio One" came about; many artists were not using their studios and were asked to leave, which meant that there were many studios that needed to be filled. Moya had just graduated from CAP and was attending the life drawing classes that Anthony held once a week in the annexe of the South African National Gallery. Moya was very quiet and withdrawn and Anthony suggested that he should apply with other CAP graduates to be able to work at Greatmore. The first intention was that they could work in the courtyard (plans were under way at this time to build a covering over the courtyard) during office hours. Another version told to me is that Greatmore was getting inundated with applications from young artists for studio spaces, and the committee felt they needed to adhere to the needs of artists in Cape Town. The original intention was to instigate a three-month rota where art graduates would have an exhibition at the end of their residency. This adaptation of the ethos that Greatmore shares with The Bag Factory and Gasworks to give space to

"emerging artists" rather then just "professional" artists was considered to be a virtuous and appropriate change, in context of the limited resources and other spaces available to young artists in Cape Town.

From the outset, the plan for Studio One, as it become known, was to fulfil moral desires over empowering youth, and it was with pride that this was presented as being different from Gasworks and the Bag Factory. When I first arrived at Greatmore, the administrator explained that this was a deliberate difference, which was an entitlement under the understanding that all workshops and studio complexes within TAT should be run according to local needs. Moreover, Studio One was clearly identified as an outreach project on the website, thus the endeavour was considered as a means by which Greatmore as a whole, as an institution could "give back".

> Greatmore has identified a need to provide studio space to those artists who have recently completed studying art and serious about making art their chosen career. We have allocated one large studio, where four artists who recently graduated may share a space. This studio provides the artists with a space to work from whilst benefiting from the professional environment and experience from the artists residing at the studios.
> (www.greatmoreart.org/educationoutreach, 27th March 2003)

When I arrived at Greatmore, Studio One had been operating for about a month, and there was much praise about the "energy" the four artists had brought to Greatmore, that Greatmore had been too empty and quiet before they came. Other artists thanked them for their enthusiasm and commitment to art-making, coming to Greatmore every day and working through the night. Many visitors came to see them and hang out in their studio, sometimes also making art. Greatmore was very busy and there were always artists around, when a few months previously, sometimes only the residency artists would regularly come in. All four artists in Studio One had their studio rent paid for them by the Artreach fund at the AVA for the first three months, before successfully applying to the Wigg Fund, which would cover costs for their studio rent and materials for the next six months, until February 2003. International curators were advised to visit Greatmore to see Studio One during this time, and Alex explained to me that staying at Greatmore was enabling artists to be nurtured into being professionals, that Greatmore was the only place that allowed them to develop this way. As at the Bag Factory, where new artists are encouraged to join the

Working Group, so as to rejuvenate the "creative energy", older artists, some of whom have been associated with the collective since its inception, have a mentoring role towards younger artists (Xinisteris and Doepel 2001: 6), Greatmore extended this by placing Lizwi, the oldest artist in a mentoring role, consolidated by his studio housing a printing press to be used by "young artists".

Fig. 5.2. Studio One with Moya, Thando and Manzi

Manzi, Moya, Thando and Phato generated much interest among the administrator and trustees, as well as other gallery owners and art dealers/curators. But these interested groups were specifically interested in these artists and Greatmore because of the new focus on young black artists, while many other artists in Cape Town were becoming less and less interested in Greatmore. One example of the characteristic that Greatmore developed for itself was articulated in an article written in local The Big Issue by Mario Pissarra (2003), in which he describes Greatmore as providing a forum through which these township artists could sell their work. This conflicts with the ideal that Greatmore has set itself, to provide spaces where artists can work in ways which allow them to develop *different* ways of working through the interaction with a *range* of different artists, being very much an extension of the aims of Thupelo. A further misunderstanding was that Greatmore was striving to be an organisation that

supported refugees, a result of people hearing that Maurice, a refugee from the DRC, was working there. Due to the visibility and the networking abilities of these artists, Greatmore, a fluid organisation, came to be associated with these artists; the result being that other artists further distanced themselves from Greatmore. Sue Williamson who had set up All Star Studio in Woodstock and other artists I interviewed were concerned about the ethos Greatmore had developed for itself and were no longer interested in interacting with artists at Greatmore. Sue gave me a formulaic response to my query about what she thought of Greatmore, stating that it cannot be disputed that Robert has helped many black artists in South Africa (25 March 2003). Greatmore came to be associated with black artists, township art production (see chapter 3) and an NGO, helping needy individuals.

These different attitudes, whether they are excited by the developments at Greatmore or uninterested, are the consequences of particular needs being identified and addressed by certain organisers and committee members at Greatmore. The outcome was that Studio One became the focus of Greatmore, which the artists were very aware of. The confidence of these four artists grew and grew, and they became extremely demanding, considering the administrator to be working for them. Friends would come to work in their studio, but they complained that too many people were working in one studio, that they should be given another studio. Then one approached Alex, asking her to raise funds for a property for them in Woodstock. All spoke of wanting to live in Woodstock, that they felt very different to others living in Khaylitsha or Phillipi. The bohemian environment of Woodstock suited their desires to be middle class and members of what they perceived to be the mainstream art community. The irony is that these had not been the intentions set out by the managers; success, for them was to see the artists acting modestly. As has been suggested above, having a studio at Greatmore is considered to be a gateway to success, building contacts, and interaction with a broader art community. Artists went to Greatmore with the intention that having a studio would be helpful to them in their career, but this is different from the means to be helpful as expressed by the management. Greatmore as a panacea is most clearly seen from the expectations of the artists who shared Studio One. These artists believed that being at Greatmore would take them out of the townships, that they would be embraced as a central part of Cape Town's art world. The number of young artists wanting to come and work

with the four artists in studio One confirmed the importance of what the studio was doing. However, the management was left with the issue of how this fitted with the mission statement of Greatmore being a professional studio complex.

In March 2003 there were some changes at Greatmore that mainly concerned number 49. Maurice moved out of Lizwi's studio and into Studio One, along with two friends of Studio One, while Manzi and Thando moved into a vacant studio next door to Studio One. This had the effect of opening up this house. It is perhaps ironic that it was number 49 that housed the shared studio, since as the year went on, what had started as a shared studio gradually became a shared building. The centrality and the focus of 47 were gradually undermined during the year as 49 became more autonomous. Four studios are accessed through the front door at 49, while a fifth studio in this house has two doors, one in the hall of 49 and one that opens onto the courtyard that is reached through 47. But the lock on the door in 49 was broken and it was left permanently locked, leaving the only access to the studio being the one through the courtyard. In effect Studio One expanded to take up three studios in number 49. Sebe was the only artist in 49 to keep his studio private. The other three studios were opened up to create a very porous set of studios, two studios becoming one after the inter-connecting door was left permanently open. The artists were sleeping there, showering in another bathroom that was accessible through two studios, using a little electric stove in the kitchen for cooking. These facilities enabled them to live at Greatmore in relative comfort, but against the house rules. Electricity would run out much quicker in this house and neighbours started to report to Alex that artists were sleeping at the studios.

The good intentions of the trustees and committee were ridiculed by the increasing confidence of the artists who had studios in this house. Transport became the central issue upon which artists explained the necessity of spending nights at Greatmore. Like Gasworks and the Bag Factory, all the artists at Greatmore are given keys and are encouraged to come and go freely, which is considered to be a means by which artists can express their responsibility. In line with being responsible artists, Studio One demanded the right to work in the evening – practising their right to be autonomous responsible artists, but this meant that they had to stay the night because of a lack of transport, which became a dilemma for the management. Ben and Amy

could whisk between home and the studio because they had cars and lived only a twenty-minute walk away in Observatory. There was no public transport at night, after about 7pm, and even if they were travelling in each day, the taxis were too expensive and the trains were considered to be too dangerous. The transport situation became the focus of the justification for sleeping on the premises, which was imbued with racial tension. The feeling among the organisers was that the artists sleeping at the studio were manipulating this issue, and that they would be aware of how sensitive the organisers would find it to deal with. During the year, the artists were occasionally challenged but no action was taken until May 2003, when some of the artists concerned had been at Greatmore for about a year. During the year that I was there, the management would occasionally worry about whether to impose access hours or not (7am – 7pm), but were only too aware that this went against the expression of autonomy and responsibility that was encouraged.

These artists were young and black and thus desirable beneficiaries of help and liberal intentions. But this benevolence was later recognised as being problematic and, importantly, was recognised as having consequences for how particular artists behaved, as well as for the reputation of Greatmore. There is still a very limited education and range of opportunities available to many black artists in Cape Town and Greatmore wanted to help them, but this help was shaped by liberal intentions and ideals, which include concerns with the expectations and behaviour of those being helped. However, when those being helped, refused to be manageable, they were in a sense, beyond help and had to be dealt with accordingly. Bringing prostitutes, alcohol and drugs onto the premises and sleeping on the premises were all issues that the administration and trustees took very seriously. Being autonomous and having one's own studio were about being responsible, which is also about being managed, about being assessed. Development and the progress of artists' ability to better themselves were recognised in particular ways, but when they were not adhered to, the artists were deemed not able to help themselves (see Adrian above).

During a meeting a few weeks before the eviction, Jill acted as representative for the Trustees, stating that Greatmore is not to be an artists' commune and demanding that the interconnecting doors between the studios be locked permanently shut on the basis that separate studios indicates order and responsibility, thus taking away individual

rights to negotiate interaction and autonomy (personal communication, 2nd February 2003). This attempt to restore order was based on the notion that to impose individuality would simultaneously encourage responsibility and hence, professionalism, through stopping the porous and communal use of the building, which was considered to curtail communal power. Jill also stated that the trustees would not tolerate sleeping at Greatmore. In her later eviction speech, Jill explained that this is being done because people are still abusing the house rules and living at Greatmore, asserting that Greatmore is not to be a community centre, that this is not the intentions of the Trustees (personal communication, 27th May 2003). This is a projection, blaming artists for the NGO nature of Greatmore, when it has been instigated by decisions made by the management.

Seven artists were asked to leave Greatmore once the full number staying at the studios was realised by the management. This situation clearly upset Alex, who explained that this was because of the "head-fuck situation", where the white management were having to stand up to accusations of racism, holding firm in their own beliefs that they were doing the right thing (personal communication, 27th May 2003). There was much anger at this decision, which was understood to be racist by the artists being evicted and also led to accusations of "selling out" being made to Clint for not aligning himself with their side of the conflict. Less than a week after the artists were dismissed, there was a break-in at Greatmore where all the office and computer equipment was stolen and the office was trashed. No prosecutions were made and no one was openly blamed for it. The right to revolt, and to conceive of rights and empowerment differently from the organisers is, bizarrely, action that they were obliged to uphold. Kenneth Minogue explains:

> From the nineteenth century onwards, some extensions of state power (especially the redistributions of wealth which began to constitute the state as a system of welfare for all members of society) were justified on the grounds that the state stood for higher morality. Citizens thus came to believe that they had rights *against* the state. The State's claim to suspend law, to guard its own secrets, to the use of nonlegal measures in dealing with enemies who themselves resorted to terror – all the traditional apparatus of *raison d'etat* – was challenged, and it was felt to be the duty of the state to represent the highest moral standards even against those who violated them. (1987: 240, original emphasis)

The refusal of the evicted artists to be passive subjects in need of empowerment and to have asserted their rights to be empowered artists and individuals with opinions about their treatment and how they express their empowerment, came to be accepted as such. Thus, these actions amount to critical interventions into the conceptions of empowerment, the means to which came to be offered by Greatmore itself, just as Polly Street was a resource that artists negotiated as a means to adhere to their own needs for interaction and support (see chapter 2).

When I returned two months later, two of these artists were in Germany, having an exhibition, two others were renting a studio in the centre of Cape Town, another returned to Greatmore, after a private arrangement was made with Lizwi to share his studio and he had written to the Greatmore committee declaring that he had not had anything to do with the bad behaviour and had himself been treated badly by the other artists involved. Another artist had been admitted to the local psychiatric hospital, while another was working in a studio in a township and complained about the high rent, while the seventh was planning to return to education. The evictions seemingly offered Greatmore the opportunity to redefine its identity, to assert its difference from NGOs, so that it would no longer be mistaken for a "community centre" (Jill, personal communication, 2nd May 2003), which the managers had themselves created. Zwelethu was invited to have a studio at Greatmore, but refused on grounds that it was NGO-like (personal communication, 18th February 2005), which is precisely the reason Jill wanted him to come, to dispel the NGO reputation that Greatmore has (personal communication, Jill, May 2nd 2003). Four new artists did arrive, including Anthony, (committee member) and an artist who had previously had a studio there and was also a Trustee for Thupelo. The new artists did create more of an atmosphere of professionalism, but it could also be said that these artists were more manageable, which is considered to be the same as professionalism. The importance of manageability, which is also considered to be equal to being autonomous and responsible, became easier to maintain.

Conclusion

There is an attraction to perceiving Greatmore as working at the grassroots, which is idealised "as some kind of innocent political terrain" (Mindry 2001: 1203), where the management works as "grassroots actors" and "agents of transformation" (ibid.).

Such a sanitized and moralistic community creates a contradiction, for NGOs tend not to work with people once they are professional. Professional artists are by definition, independent, thus, to express a wish to be inclusive, not only alludes to black participants and the assumption that they need empowering, but it is to specify black youth, even black male youth. The privileging of these groups for empowerment while other groups such as urban black women are ignored or marginalized is by no means unusual (Mindry 2001: 1206). Such moralising also tends to rely on intuition and avoids reflection on how long term impacts can be realised; instead it is missionary-like in its commitment and belief in a cause. The cause, at Greatmore, is to produce morally and ethically constituted individuals, which are global in their reach. Professionalism was almost conceived as being at odds with a "multicultural communal studio facility" with its promoting of sanitized beliefs while professional artists have infamously been associated with drugs, alcohol and prostitutes, and it could be provocatively suggested that this is what many artists at Greatmore were enacting. Therefore, the aims of Greatmore concern something else, namely the producing of submissive docile subjects (after Comaroff 2001). At Greatmore managing people is the same as empowering people with lifeskills; however, lifeskills are about being responsible, which is perhaps confusingly associated with empowerment. Greatmore uses notions such as growth and empowerment, which are derived from an idea of self-discipline and manageability, to be deemed indicators of success.

The Minogue Paradox ensures that Greatmore can always be conceived as being a success; both by the organisers, who consider the fact of experiencing Greatmore for a time, ensures that artists will grow and develop, but also by the artists on the understanding that they will have the opportunity to be empowered, but which it is up to them to realise. This is not necessarily the empowerment conceived of by the organisers, which is about conformity, but it might be in some instances. But it is also to recognise that empowerment is not something that can be engineered in a way that psychosocial intervention claims to enable. However, the ideology of psychosocial intervention is such that experiences of whatever kind can also be presented as being successful, simply by virtue of being lived through, giving the experience a saccharine moralistic feel. Ultimately, psychosocial intervention is interested in "life experience" and any experience can be presented as being life affirming. But this is

also defensive, for all decisions and experiences, for both the management and artists, can be conceived as a journey of learning, without entailing responsibilities for mistakes. The next chapter will consider in more detail appeals to conceiving of art as a moralising force for good, and the dissemination of this to others.

Chapter 6: "Art is Good For You": Developing the Self through Creativity

> *We stand between the pole of "high art", which challenges all taste in its quest for the unconditioned act/work, and the pole of community – or grass-roots – art, which recognises that all people are capable of authentic and vital expression. (Bill Ainslie, quoted in Sack 1988: 26)*

Introduction

This chapter is primarily concerned with the dissemination of psychosocial intervention in Cape Town's art community. This will also consider how roles and positions facilitating psychosocial intervention form an appealing and engaging enterprise for Cape Town's white, middle-class residents, particularly women. This chapter will look at various workshops, institutions and individuals who instigated the practice of art as a means to help participants. The roles of various facilitators and how they consider themselves able to draw out certain qualities from those being facilitated will be considered. In Cape Town, as was described in earlier chapters, particularly 4, the self has been held to be realisable through producing, making and reflecting on one's creative production. This chapter will also provide a more detailed description of the context in which Greatmore and Thupelo have been operating, where art making is articulated as being a way of helping people. Creativity is romanticised and seen to be virtuous in its ability to help create healthy, balanced, independent and autonomous people. How Thupelo and Greatmore align themselves to certain institutions/workshops and not others will also be considered; this mainly concerns the degree to which the organisers advocate opportunities to enable artists/students to achieve "proper" responsibilities, balancing it against an overtly controlling means of running the workshop. This ideal is the benchmark against which empowerment and the acquisition of lifeskills are measured. Previous chapters have focused on the creativity of professional artists, while simultaneously advocating an egalitarian principle of art-making, and this chapter will consider in more detail how art is considered to be important for all people.

Controlling Freedom: The Overt Model

First to be considered is Robson, who has acted as the organiser and facilitator of art workshops organised by the clothing chain Truworths under the title Community Arts Workshop (CAW). It is important to consider the work that Robson does as his role embodies the antithesis of what those involved in Greatmore wanted to be achieving

and practising. However, he was primarily working with students and graduates from CAP, including artists who worked in Studio One at Greatmore. Moreover, one of Robson's workshops was held at Greatmore with Lizwi as coordinator; thus he had a role in the professional lives of many of the artists that were working at CAP and more who had links with Thupelo workshops and past contact with Greatmore. There was therefore during my research, a conflict of interests over the livelihood of the artists who were moving between the different opportunities being offered to them in Cape Town. What will primarily be of concern here is how Robson explains his work and role, in order to identify how he can then be seen as the antithesis of the objectives of other art-workers in Cape Town.

As part of its social engagement project, Truworths (one of the largest clothing retail chains in South Africa) established the Truworths Social Involvement Trust in 1999. This covered a number of projects that aimed to help children and adults in the townships around Cape Town (where Truworths headquarters is based), projects have included managing a basketball team, running ballroom dancing and needlework classes, and art workshops (CAW 2002). As such it seems to be disconcertingly similar to Polly Street, where art had the same status as other recreational activities aimed at civilising black dwellers in Johannesburg in the 1950s (see chapter 2), the difference being that here, art is presented as being a lifeskill. What is perhaps more disconcerting is that the workshops are meant to be for established artists; however because the artists with whom Truworths wants to work live in the townships, they are labelled "emerging", irrespective of whether they have been practising professionally for some time. This labelling has the very effective means of explaining that black artists are permanently in a state of development, which is corroborated in Cape Town by the lack of opportunities available to black artists that would curb their dependence on workshops such as this. Moreover, social development is here paired with economic development; both are more often than not presented as empowerment and hence a part of lifeskills. The development of lifeskills (economic and social) is considered realisable through recreation (read also art-making). An explanatory blurb at one exhibition sponsored by Truworths explained that the art workshops aimed to "stimulate latent creativity [and also] equip participants with technical and entrepreneurial skills" (display panel for *Umbono*, March 2003).

Robson had almost total control over CAW, although he did have two bosses at Truworths who formally employed him. In an information leaflet it states, "the CAW facilitates workshop programmes that encourage elements conducive for creativity, productivity, charity and self-sustainability; always ensuring people-centred objectives" (2002). Robson adds that these are "essential ingredients when cultivating a collective approach towards community development through arts and culture" while simultaneously claiming that "CAW fosters holistic learning, skills development" (personal communication, 5th September 2002). These statements do not explain a great deal, except that Robson knows the right language to attract funders, while tailoring the workshops to his own concerns. On another occasion, Robson told me that CAW was "about being experimental and pushing boundaries". Robson has perfected the virtuous language associated with much art-making, particularly art workshops in South Africa, but the practice of his workshops was controlled in such a way as to ensure that he can present such formulaic statements about them to others. The control that is deployed comes to be essential in ensuring that clearly discernable results can be recognised and identified. One such result that became very visible was the Emerging Artist Fund (EAF), developed from the proceeds of work sold at the workshops, contributing to the status of CAW as central to Truworths Social Involvement Trust, and also providing money for Robson to use as he saw appropriate. This drive for economic gain influenced the manner in which Robson facilitated or managed his workshops.

Robson explained to me that he was a selfless worker, helping artists in such a way that it affected the "whole life-cycle of an artist"; thus, the whole person had to be helped and the tool he employed to do this was lifeskills training. Robson explicitly equated being a successful artist to being a clearly recognisable individual, and lifeskills training lent itself very well to this cause. Robson was proud to have written a "Self-Empowerment Training Manual" which consisted of 12 generic steps to becoming an artist, and explained that this manual was a template upon which an individual artist could be developed. He believed that he had mapped out the DNA of a successful artist, the individual stamp which he had set out, and which I had the privilege of being shown, but was not allowed to borrow, because of his anxiety that his formula might get into the wrong hands. This manual was made for a 12-day

workshop that he had previously coordinated. Robson explained the importance of the diagrams of a tree that was present in each chapter; that the tree diagrams help get this concept of a unique artist across in a natural way, that you start as an acorn and can constitute your own growth and self-empowerment, for the tree acts as an essence of uniqueness (see chapter 2 for a similar way of using a tree as a model for developing an individuated self). The image of a tree came to be a way of ordering and defining the uniqueness of a person, of exposing it and of managing it. Robson was clear that this programme was about engineering unique artists, but this had to be managed, not only were artists not allowed to take the manual home at the end of each day, but they were not allowed to browse through it during the workshop. They were to address one chapter each day.

Robson expressed concern over what he perceived to be the dominating force of intellectualism, voicing his anxieties in a strikingly clear manner, albeit one that tended towards cliché. He spoke of the two worlds in which art is taught in Cape Town; CAP where the teaching is "earthy and practical" where students are taught survival skills, while at Michaelis the focus is intellectual, "you learn to have the mind and the talk so that people are enthralled by what you say about your work". Robson spoke of the dangers of setting up a community project because it could be taken over by intellectuals. This resentment and feeling of intimidation by intellectualism is not only evidence of Robson's own fear of being marginalized by those whom he perceived as intellectually vocal artists, but is a wider feeling which is cloaked in the rhetoric of inclusively. Robson betrayed an underlying anxiety that was shared by others who promote programmes of inclusiveness; the programmes come to be a means through which to reassure themselves that they have an important role in the new South Africa. This role is confirmed through talking of freedom and equating it with individualism, but individualism is a managed concept and the possibility of realising it is also in need of being managed. The notion of art and its relationship to oneself is managed so as to have tangible benefits that the facilitators can believe in and can see evidence for in the artworks made. This is despite having no formal teaching or facilitation qualifications; indeed this contributes to anxiety and defensiveness about alleged elitism, and the importance of combating it.

During my research Robson organised one CAW workshop for twelve artists, and explained prior to its starting, that this workshop was going to be different: he was not going to choose the subject to be painted (personal communication 19th September 2002). It was titled *Umbono*, meaning "vision" in Xhosa, and the medium was to be pastel and chalk A3 paper. Despite the connotations of freedom inherent in the title, *Umbono*, the limitations of the materials available acted to constrain the degree of freedom participants could practice, which was justified on the grounds that the materials were being provided by CAW. Robson also stipulated that each participant had to make a minimum of four drawings, while attendance and "full commitment" was also demanded. Nevertheless, Thando, who attended this workshop and many others organised by Robson, explained to me that this workshop was different in that Robson did not direct exactly what they had to depict in their artworks and the participants could price their own works and receive all the percentage of work sold (none was going to EAF). However, artists were still to hand over the decisions concerning which work was to be displayed to Truworths; Robson explained that this was "part of the process of being involved". This is an interesting mis-use of the word *process*, to signify conformity to set rules. I met Robson once the workshop had finished and he declared that the next workshop would be very prescriptive, very collective and collaborative, all working on the same theme, with each artist having a sub-theme. What seemed to be a very controlled experience at *Umbono* felt uncontrollable and thus threatening for Robson. Robson explained that he felt disappointed that as coordinator he did not contribute to the workshop "because I left them, and from a critical/guidance point of view, I gave no advice" (personal communication 31st October 2002). He continued that guidelines are essential to lead you through the process, the journey, while simultaneously demanding a collective aesthetic. Robson was adamant that erasing individual talent through collective work, made the workshop not only less intimidating but not surprisingly, also made himself more involved, and more active in his role as facilitator/controller of the outcomes.

It is worth mentioning at this point some of the participants attending this CAW workshop; there were only two women in a group of twenty participants. One of these women was very young and studying at CAP, while the other woman was a well-known artist internationally. Phyllis has been included in national and international exhibitions, was a student at CAP during its heyday of the 1980s and has

been a participant at Thupelo when it was in Johannesburg and also had a studio at Greatmore for some time. It was therefore a surprise to see her participating here when the emphasis was so clearly on helping unknown artists to create a name for themselves as successful artists. Three artists from Studio One attended, feeling that they had a leadership role, which was emphasised by Robson, who spoke of "their experience". It is worth noting that this was not applied to Phyllis, despite her considerable experience. Robson explained to me during one of my interviews with him, that Moya (from Studio One) had gained the confidence he now had as a direct consequence of attending his Self-Empowerment workshop. That Moya chose not to attend this workshop, was perhaps a sign of too much empowerment, giving him confidence to turn down opportunities. There was only one explicit dissenting voice concerning this workshop, that of Sebe at the registration meeting, where he questioned Robson who had been explaining that the work had to be pleasing to the eye, by asking him "whose eye?" to which Robson replied, "lets say the general public eye". Sebe explained: "this workshop does not make sense to me. You should be going to the townships and channelling resources there, this does not do anything, this is not really serious for it is just for one week" (21st September 2002).

Robson is spoken of by others working in the arts in Cape Town as the antithesis of what they wanted to be doing, which focuses on the liberal notion of creating opportunities for artists/people to understand themselves better and from where they can develop their unique self and achieve a sense of meaningfulness and fulfilment by themselves. Robert said that he was aware of the criticism others had over how he ran the workshops, but justified this on grounds of needing to take control because "complete freedom can be intimidating for many participants". This *need* to control is spoken simultaneously with the importance of artists being free; Robson clearly articulated that individuality/empowerment was achieved through a controlled situation. For Robson the seemingly contradictory notions of control and freedom were achievable due to the way that he managed his workshops. Alex, administrator at Greatmore, among others I worked with were very clear that Robson was "a control freak", enabling them to use him as a measure against which they could assure themselves that they were not creating controlling environments where artists or art-makers were coerced into doing particular things. Rather they wanted to believe that they were creating environments conducive to creativity where participants could find

their own unique creative expression. This, in turn made the facilitators feel good and worthy people (despite the fact that Robson felt the same). To feel that one is an educator is clearly recognised and respected as a means to have a role in the apparent liberation and empowerment of others, but this is to mistake all education as an empowering, liberating and humanitarian endeavour, as articulated by Paulo Freire (2004 and see chapter 1).

"Acknowledging Mark-Making": A Means to Acknowledge the Self

A facilitator of art classes who was commonly understood to be a direct opposite to the way that Robson conducted his workshops was Anthony. As well as being on the committee for Thupelo and Greatmore, Anthony was holding weekly life-drawing classes at the South African National Gallery (SANG) Annexe that were open to anyone, and while there was a small fee of 40 Rand that covered the costs of hiring a model, struggling artists and artists at Greatmore did not have to pay. Most people brought their own materials, but it was also possible to purchase paper at the class. Clint took on the role of being Anthony's assistant and was the only artist from Greatmore who regularly attended these classes; he was also extremely popular with many of the white women who attended.[1] Anthony had attended these classes when Jill Trappler started them in the late 1990s, taking over the teaching/facilitation of them in 2002. The classes last for three hours with a twenty-minute break, and tea and coffee is provided. Many of the people who attended also attended Jill's workshops (see below), and Jill can be credited with getting the SANG Annexe used regularly for art-related workshops and exhibitions (including the regional Thupelo workshop).

Anthony expressed great annoyance with people who talked about art as a career opportunity, when for Anthony making art is about being good to oneself, about being truly happy with oneself – not about embarking on a career; it is more immediate and necessary than that, and Anthony also shied away from claiming art to be useful or "helpful" (personal communication 22nd November 2002). Anthony explained to me that this explanation was most common during outreach projects, making art was explained to the participants as being practically useful. While at the art classes in the

[1] Several months after finishing fieldwork, Clint started his own art classes in Hout Bay, a conservative suburb of Cape Town, where many participants of Anthony's classes lived.

Annexe, this practical element is not emphasised in the same way, participants do seek to make it meaningful to them, but it is expressed as a therapeutic need, it is important to their well-being that they make art. For Anthony, art-making concerns an engagement that a person has with producing an image (or object), it is people's engagement with the act of mark making that interests Anthony, and this is where he sees people at their happiest with themselves. But this still comes with standards and expectations, what a person makes/produces needs to be meaningful, needs to "say something". While Anthony avoids secondary moralising justifications for explaining what he is doing or the impact that it has on those he teaches, the process of making and the impact it is considered to have on the makers, is a therapeutic one.

Although not many come from Greatmore, there have been times when artists linked to it have come, including the artists from Studio One; it was from attending these classes that Anthony put them in touch with Greatmore and it was also where Maurice went before getting a studio at Greatmore. Adrian would come and sell work to the other participants, as did Clint. Thando was the only artist from Greatmore to attend regularly once he was established at Greatmore. Anthony chose not to be bothered that not many from Greatmore came, and that as a consequence he is left teaching mainly wealthy white women and one white man who had taken early retirement after having a stroke. Anthony explained to me that it did not matter who the people were as what he was interested in was individuals making art, and he identifies this as being what he has in common with Jill; they both get excited by someone's making process. That this is very different from engaging with finished work in a gallery, makes it similar with the aims of Thupelo, with its own privileging of process over finished works (see chapters 3 and 4). What this privileging does is to encourage the consideration of the relationship between the maker and his or her work. For Anthony, making and considering the marks made is a means to acknowledge the self, a concern with caring for the self and is considered to be important, indeed necessary for all people to engage with.

Anthony talks of the importance that the work "says something", ("this part isn't saying anything"). During one class Anthony explained that there was a triangular relationship between the model, paper and yourself, that each element is important and that they are in dialogue with each other. Throughout his classes, Anthony talks

about mark-making (emphasis on the doing), and tries to encourage the participants to engage with the marks they are making. Anthony talks of "getting a sense of the figure, rather than drawing it", of privileging the "rhythms of mark-making" and of being "sensitive to the marks that we have already made" during a class in which he got the participants to draw over previous drawings of a figure by turning the paper around (see Warnier 2001 and chapter 1). This engagement with marks that someone is making and has made, is considered to encourage the maker to become absorbed in the process or importance of mark-making rather then trying to perfect a style or realism which Anthony feels distracts from the making process. Concerning the work that I made, Anthony spoke of being excited by my newness to it, that my work is "fresh" and not stuck in a style or expectations, while other participants said they were so impressed by my abstract work, that being young I was more brave, more able to take risks.

Anthony was also concerned with the importance of acknowledging this externalisation of oneself, about recognising and acknowledging what one has produced; Anthony advised me to take the work that I had made home so that I could *acknowledge* it, that this is important even if it is unsettling, even painful. Anthony spoke of watching people at his classes become totally absorbed in what they are making, and by this he means that they seem to be completely at one with themselves, but once they step away to look at what they are doing, (i.e. once the making process is halted) they doubt what they have produced and criticise it. For Anthony this criticism of their work is also a criticism of themselves, as there is, for Anthony, a intricate relationship between the two. Anthony sees his role as being to coax them back to their work, to make them re-engage with what they are doing, when they have disengaged themselves. While it would seem that Anthony does not overly dramatise the relationship between the maker and the work they make, through using terms such as "empowerment" and "life-journey work", through his interest in the individual and their relationship to the art that they make, he takes quite literally the power of art-making to influence the individual making art. As such it is very similar to the role that others in the Cape Town art movement understand art to have, its ability to engage with the maker and have an impact of therapeutic significance. While considering the bitterness directed at Robson, Anthony commented that he wished "we could all get on as we are all doing the same thing", which is an important

concession to have voiced. There is a similarity between facilitators (who are almost always white in Cape Town) believing their own ability to do good; a potential consequence is that such self-justifications and congratulations are reasons to continue facilitating empowerment workshops.

Therapy Through "Activating Images"

As was discussed in many of the above chapters, there is a moral economy that benefits and satisfies many white women's needs to feel empowered as well as being an empower-er. The rest of this chapter will consider women who had positions where they imparted "empowering" knowledge to others and as a consequence felt themselves to be empowered too. Jill is a trustee of Thupelo, indeed is responsible for bringing Thupelo to Cape Town, and is the niece of Bill Ainslie (see chapter 3). Jill has been very influenced by Ainslie's legacy, which has been further therapeutised at the Image Making Workshops. This interest is expressed by an adherence to psychosocial intervention, and given credibility by her husband, David Trappler who is a practising Jungian psychiatrist.[2] David Trappler attended a couple of the Johannesburg Thupelo workshops, and supports Jill by offering to provide analysis to any of the participants at her workshop who want to have a deeper insight into their work than Jill can offer them. What does differentiate Jill from Ainslie is the almost exclusive interest that these workshops receive from a particular sociological group, namely middle class white women.

The participants are consistently late middle aged, middle class white women who spoke of needing these workshops, admiring Jill to such an extent that she possibly transcended the influence that Ainslie had over his students. This is due to Jill's ability to tap into the desires and anxieties of these women (also see chapter 4), making them feel worthwhile and important in their own right. While Jill is quite different in how she expresses the importance of art-making, as we shall see, she does share a concern with Anthony about the importance of engaging in the processes of

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[2] Jung is a peculiar choice for promoting inclusivity, given his racist position – see Dalal (1988) and Littlewood (1992b: 10); however, Jung privileges intuitive beliefs over analytical thought, characteristic of psychosocial intervention. Saul Dubow comments on the growing interest in Jungian thought among South African analysts, locating this fasciniation with the non-rational and non-material aspects of primitivity in a tradition stretching back to the Romantic myth of the "Noble Savage" (1995: 206).

other people's art-making, irrespective of ability, for both privilege the individual and their own relationship to the art they are producing, as well as their relationship to their surroundings. Descriptions of Jill's own work reflect this; "[her] paintings capture the unconscious, intuitive, physical and sensual world all around us. For her, art is a timeless experience that attempts to make conscious the invisible and the unknown" (Craig 1999: 64, see also Read in chapter 1). In the same article, Jill describes her own work: "I want my works of art to be generators of energy – natural, spiritual energy that continues to engage and inspire in an attempt to perpetuate and nurture the light and creativity in all of us" (ibid.). Jill has an ability to combine a concern with serious art-making with a therapeutic focus, saying, "with paint I find a place where thought and action seem inextricably and deeply linked" (www.greatmoreart.org.za/artistsprofile).

The concerns of these women likewise focus on desires to be taken seriously as artists, and also to be liberated. This appeal to be liberated is premised on the understanding that one is damaged/traumatised/a victim and the associated need to embark on a process of acceptance of this and healing. To embark on a journey or process of healing is considered to be essential to many in Cape Town, particularly white women. Life is presented by facilitators of psychosocial intervention as being a journey, and to undertake a process presented as being one of self-discovery is considered to be central to such journeys. Art is frequently spoken of in terms of it being a process, thus lending itself very well to this perpetual journey, and it is worth noting that Jill talks of the demands of art as being the same as life (www.greatmoreart.org.za/artistsprofile). This is also evidence of being influenced by *The Artist's Way* (1992), which allows for the appeal to both bourgeois sensibilities encouraged by self-help generally, but also an ability to make the most of notions of African spontaneity (see chapter 2).

The participants would arrive carrying their tools in either large tool kit containers, or Harrods shopping bags, with which they brought out postcards of works from the National Gallery in London, from which to inspire their own work. This is expressed as entanglement by Pauline Mottram, a white South African art therapist: "Inner experience may reflect multiple and diverse aspects and fragments of cultures experienced in the past as well as elements of the current cultural experience" (1999:

115). Art making is combined with the power of emotional expression that everyone is expected to have in the depths of oneself: "you could be well brought up and have a river of hatred or anger that you've channelled away and can be unleashed in art" (Colette Morey de Morand, quoted in Jaggi, 2004). This quote is particularly interesting as it is sympathetic to artists who have privileged backgrounds, yet still have emotions to unleash, and it is this that illuminates the appeal to Jill's workshops, as experienced by this sociological group. It is personal, almost a selfish desire to be liberated which does not then have the impact of reverberating out to larger society, but is conceived as a right. However it should be noted that Jill selects certain women that attend her workshops to be invited to Thupelo workshops (see chapter 4 for the impact of this), but this acts to "expose them to wider society" (personal communication with Jade, 3rd October 2002), which Jill understands to be a form of brave enlightenment – but again it is personal enlightenment.

The Image Making workshops each have spaces for 20 participants. Experienced and beginner artists are encouraged to attend, there is a fee and participants are expected to bring their own materials, while some can be bought at the workshop. While there are many shared characteristics with the ethos of Thupelo, such as the relationship one has with one's work, Thupelo workshops are for professional artists. Jill's own workshops put into practice her understanding that art-making should be accessible to anyone. At these workshops making art is intrinsically linked to working through personal issues, and helping oneself to be well. As such, they have a therapeutic approach that is very appealing to this group. Like Thupelo, these workshops privileged interaction and had walkabouts, while being called Image Making Workshops, which asserts the perceived importance of reflecting on something that one has made, and the relationship one has to it.

Previous workshops have been advertised by describing the subject that directs all the workshops that Jill facilitates; this being the intricate relationship between the self and the artwork produced by one self. The one-week (five day) workshops were given different focuses within this overall theme. Titles and descriptions included "The Impulse to Draw" which stated that "[d]rawing is a natural expression of the psyche seeking to reveal itself. Kimon Nicolaides wrote that the 'impulse to draw is as natural as the impulse to talk'" (2002); the description for "A Happy Mistake",

explained that in this workshop "we will deliberately take chances, let go, work without intention and push beyond 'ability'. Our clues will be found in what emerges from the surfaces we create" (2001) while "Image-In-Action" held that "Creating an image requires energy. This creative energy is transferred to the image and in turn enables the viewer to interact with the image [...] What we think, feel, imagine and intuit, together with the interplay of the senses, all contribute to the deliberate action of forming an image. These images can contain both something intensely personal and eternal, with an immediacy often lost in spoken language" (2002). Moreover, these workshops sought to "re-invent, re-invigorate and re-generate our ideas" about creativity, with understanding what goes into making an image (2002). Jill explains that this can be done "by changing habits and by unlearning what we know" (ibid.) so as to "free ourselves from a lot of unnecessary encumbrances and unwanted responsibilities brought by ambition, envy and other two-edged swords" (Jung, quoted in ibid.).

The statements in the adverts are presented as being unquestionable, while the idea of questioning is held as being paramount to the importance of the workshops; questioning the relationship between the different materials used in an artwork, or what artworks are saying. As in previous chapters, there is this notion of order through which freedom and knowledge can be gained. The order here is the necessity to take literally the connection of oneself to one's art, to embrace it. This is also apparent at Thupelo; the opening speeches that Jill gives are a version of the presentation of art that is given at her own workshops. What is distinctive about both workshops is the privileging of creativity as a natural force that can shape and direct well-being, although the degree to which this is asserted varies.

It is the making and reflecting on the creative process one is engaged with that is the primary concern at the Image Making workshops; they are about dealing with the "creative impulses" that are believed to be inside everyone. Discussing and reflecting on finished work, including thinking about when a work can be felt to be finished, is important, but in relation to each maker's own processes and needs. These must be drawn on so as to "activate the images", but how they are activated is a matter for their creator; their own energy and enthusiasm are under the guidance of Jill, whose role is to engage with each individual process and (challenge) accordingly. Images

are not activated through expertise or experience but through the commitment that a person has with the images they are bringing into being. It is a malleable shifting and questioning relationship that someone has with the images that they make, which activates them, that gives them meaning, that are both separate from and intricately tied to their creator.

These workshops have been based on another series of workshops that Jill organised at UCT's Centre for Extra-Mural Studies summer and winter schools. The same participants attend both seasons' workshops and the workshops at the SANG Annexe. The most recent UCT workshop that preceded the one I attended at the Annexe was called "Pushing paint: an art workshop", and the brochure explained that in this practical image-making workshop, participants will experience some of the processes that go into making a painting. Jill has told me that these workshops are different from Thupelo, including the Regional workshops, because of the leadership role Jill makes for herself. "The emphasis will be on participation so that the teacher/student paradigm is shifted into an exchange of artists" (Trappler 2003). While this suggests a similarity or even an exact adaptation from Thupelo with its emphasis on process and an artist being both teacher and student (see chapter 4), there is a difference, or rather a structure at the image-making workshops, which Jill explains that she will "quietly impose". Jill explained that this structure will be imposed through her role as a workshop leader, and while this is totally dismissed at Thupelo, it is what is so appealing to the regular participants of Jill's image making workshops.

This structure or facilitation is a kind of authority that is imposed, but is presented as being something else, as coming from the self. Indeed, Jill states this: "I am to try and give you a sense of your own work, give you a sense of your own authority, that it is something inside of you". This is extremely popular with the participants, who see Jill as their guru (see Catherine in chapter 4 and Bill Ainslie in chapter 3). Jill speaks of wanting her followers to "realise the importance of image making [...] that it needs to be done on a daily basis". This is preaching that speaks of image-making as a requirement, as a matter of discipline, out of which freedom (equated with health) can be obtained. Although Jill has a (welcomed) position of authority, she presents her role as being one that is to coax or "bring authority out of your own work", that authority needs to be found within oneself. This self-found authority then acts to

"neutralise" the role of the teacher. Despite Jill's reluctance to be a teacher, her position as one is not in question as a consequence of needing to impose this structured idea of what art or image making is about. Although a part of this ideology is one that presents the teacher and learner as one, to accomplish this requires a leader, and the participants equally demand Jill takes on the role of leader, of a guru. This brings into question the idea of freedom, as it seems to require a large degree of order and conformity.

But perhaps this degree of order that the participants crave so much is linked to the desire for meaning, to be reassured that what they are doing is important and worthwhile. The neediness of the participants is paradoxical in privileged late middle-aged, white women, who participate in an artworld that is primarily recreational, but Jill gives them a sense of the importance of their art-making. That it was explained that making art daily was essential, that this is not simply a matter of perfecting technique, but rather about enabling the self to grow and to understand oneself better, assumed a degree of pain and trauma that needs to be resolved. Dawn, who had shared a studio with Patricia at Greatmore was going blind, but making art enabled her to give form to some of the turbulence she felt that she was experiencing. Amanda shared a table with me and explained that these workshops gave her confidence, that she considers herself an artist but that she looses confidence. Making art at these workshops (which she attended regularly) let Amanda recharge her confidence as an artist and confidence as a (white) woman, dealing with issues of patriarchy in her work. Amanda explained that her work was inspired by paintings she had seen at the National Gallery in London, and was about women celebrating being women.

Rebecca was recently retired and felt that attending these workshops and Anthony's drawing classes was a way of ensuring her well-being, but was interested to know what I thought of them. Rebecca wondered whether they were simply "about retired, well-off suburban women indulging in what they can afford to indulge in". Rebecca immediately suppressed this by saying that this was a necessity, that she would probably be depressed if she did not attend these workshops. Rebecca is the only participant I spoke to who questioned what was going on at these workshops, while simultaneously talking about the necessity of them as the other participants did. This

concerns the need to be taken seriously, and also the importance of Jill, and her ability to reassure the participants that image making is critical to their well-being, which needs to be practised every day. These workshops are to reassure participants that what they are doing is important, giving them the confidence to continue at home by themselves. Another woman, Amy, told me that "this is therapy, about balance of mind, or meditation", which is paraphrased from Jill, but so desirable because it is experienced as Jill taking them seriously. Amy explained to me that she is not a full-time artist, but works from home and can be flexible with her time, thus enabling her to make art each day. Fiona explained that she makes charcoal images as a way to unwind, rubbing parts out using an eraser. Describing a painting that she is close to finishing, Fiona told me that "the painting talks to you and becomes something other than what you originally intended." This is characteristic of Jill's therapeutic approach, which encourages searches for profundity in any work. Jill's advice to Sandra was that she should make another painting so that the two can talk to each other, paintings come to be endowed with human properties (see Wollheim 1980).

Elizabeth arrived with all the "proper" artist kit, including her own easel, immaculate palette, an abundance of paints and paintbrushes and even a pristine white smock. During the first discussion, Elizabeth asked Jill to tell her how she can be taken seriously as an artist. Jill *was* critical about Elizabeth's work during a walkabout; Elizabeth had explained that her work "was just happening, that she was not really thinking about it"; Jill told her that things should be decisions and that "you need to know more about why you are producing the images you are producing". Jill told Elizabeth that she was being critical, but that to be a better artist, she needed to take herself more seriously, that then others would take her more seriously. This advice is sound, but Jill had to explain repeatedly to many participants the importance of being conscious of what they are making.

Phases such as "presence", "brave departures" and "happy accidents" are ways of talking about people's work that does not threaten, but offers encouragement to the maker of the art, whatever the standard. However, they can still be presented as offering profound insights into the work and the psyche of the maker, the two being intricately linked. What is perceived to make the whole process more challenging or profound is that Jill speaks of the need to reflect on why one makes certain art, to

impose some distance between oneself and one's work. Many find it appealing to talk about their art as "just happening" and Jill does challenge them over this, explaining that it is important to be conscious of what they are making, that this is where artistic growth is possible. But this is also confusing, with Jill seeming to invite confusion; the second day started with Jill wanting to talk about composition. She told us that she had a dream last night about her cousin, saying that she did not know what the dream was about, but what was important was that the last time she saw her cousin she had shown him/her a dress she had made. Jill came in early that morning and cut out dress patterns, arranging them in many different ways, looking at the "different things you see"; Jill explained that this is an exercise that Picasso used to do, that by doing it your eyes become more trained at seeing. Jill told us that "the impulses can feed you, but you need to practise it to make it conscious", before quoting someone else who said "art stops when construction starts". This leaves an ambiguity that is reconciled through seeing art as a therapeutic journey, which needs to be analysed as one is analysed when in therapy.

The romantic appeal of therapy is the idea of freedom, freedom to be oneself, to truly express this, yet to do this it is necessary to conform to certain rules; but these rules come to be assurances, where the unknown becomes knowable, and thus manageable. Revelations are not unexpected, but are planned, even demanded in much the way that Thupelo demands such outcomes at its workshops. A therapeutic process is possible, for Jill, from the importance of seeing, "of trying to look just with the front of your eyes rather than the usual process, which is the eyes starting at the front and then going right to the back of the brain, this makes us see with our projections". This is to encourage or perhaps demand an emotional response from the participants, which is considered possible through looking at artworks intuitively. This is believed to remove prejudice from the process of looking and understanding an artwork, but comes to be a consequence of removing wider associations which Jill associates with "the back of the brain". These sociological associations are to be censored in favour of an approach that Jill considers to be therapeutic, where self-knowledge can be gained.

Jill's role is to take the participants seriously, both in terms of their skills as artists but also as people. This is where the therapeutic idea of art is so important and

meaningful, which was articulated by Bill Ainslie, making it popular at JAF (see chapter 3), and has taken on renewed significance as Jill has created a new space for it at her own workshops as well as Thupelo and Greatmore in general. Many participants want Jill to analyse their work in a psychoanalytical way, but Jill did defer this authority to a trained psychiatrist; Jill explained on the advert for this series of workshops that further in-depth analysis could be arranged with a Jungian analyst (her husband, David). During one of the walkabouts, Jill said that Jungian analysis was an important process that we should all go through. Jill encourages this, it is a part of the importance of making what they are doing understandable and meaningful, but I did not hear her saying at Thupelo that Jungian analysis was essential to well-being. This does suggest certain alterations being made that can be identifiable to middle class white women, which in turn relate to the particular needs that these women, as a distinct sociological group have. These workshops are about restoring the individual, not society; the aims are highly individualistic, there is no attempt at linking what they are doing to broader societal processes.

Fig. 6.1. Jill (centre) leading a walkabout at the Image Making Workshop

Before the workshops started, Jill asked me to encourage artists at Greatmore to attend the workshop. She was prepared to find alternative means to fund these artists, including individual applications to the AVA Artreach fund. Despite this incentive, Thando was the only artist to attend from Greatmore; at the workshop he was not only the one male participant, but also the only black participant. During the workshop Thando was quite withdrawn, although Jill presented him as being brave, for being the only male participant. Although quiet, Thando considered his participation as a means to extend his art education and experiences. As such, he conforms to the expectations and demands of the facilitator, which is something that other artists at Greatmore were more cynical of. One factor in the cynicism of some artists is likely to concern the reception their art would get at such a workshop.[3] The reception of Thando's work at the workshop involved Jill and the other participants talking of the "energy" and "vivid colours" that he was using. This acted to individualise Thando and the work he made, enabling the presentation of this making process to have come from within, to not be externally imposed, but a means to encourage the person to experiment on their own terms, while also encouraging others to consider work in terms of the individual maker and their emotional relationship to it. Alex and Clint from Greatmore have also participated at previous workshops run by Jill, and both have felt greatly inspired by attending these; Alex's great admiration for Jill derives from attending a workshop, and she found immense encouragement from Jill's approach. While Clint "found" his attraction to Abstract Expressionism, and his abstract blue style through attending both these workshops and life drawing classes. Moreover, both have a strong spiritual interest that is encouraged at Jill's workshops, it being considered to be a way of tapping one's creativity. Anthony also attended these workshops, feeling that these workshops were the only way that he could engage with critical discussions about his own and other people's art outside of Thupelo workshops, in Cape Town.

[3] It is worth noting that Thando considered himself to be different from the other young black artists working at Greatmore, that after the evictions from Greatmore, Thando wrote to the Greatmore committee asking for studio space, explaining that he had not been a part of the group who disobeyed the house rules, and that he had himself been treated badly by the other artists concerned (see chapter 5).

Perhaps the most consistent similarity with Thupelo is the privilege given to abstract work, this being because of the possibility of interpreting abstract pieces as expressing and exposing emotions. During the Image Making walkabout when participants talked about each other's work, abstract pieces were described in such ways as being "a discovery, with lots of emotions". When a new participant showed her new work, having quickly taken on the importance of experimenting being equated with abstract expressionism (as at Thupelo), it was greeted with gasps of "she's liberated herself", "it's freeing and exciting". Another participant said of her work, that she was finding it very painful, "it's sore". Jill responded to these declarations with talk of finding things in the working process, of the importance of having a dialogue with the work. That work needs to say something to you, needs to draw you in, and as a consequence it will speak to you about yourself, thus encouraging such declarations of emotional literacy.

As at Thupelo, freedom is partnered with the workshop as a safe space. Freedom will come out of the safe space; indeed freedom can only come out of a safe space (see next chapter). But while Thupelo held onto the desire to activate the Rainbow nation, this is not directly possible at Jill's workshops even if there are one or two black men present. Instead the focus is on developing the self, in relation to its image-making; this developed self can then be called on to give each participant a stronger, surer sense of individual worth. During the workshop, participants work through issues, voice issues (ie patriarchy and feelings of not being taken seriously), which go to developing a stronger identity and sense of worth. This sense of worth is important, it is about being able to be taken seriously, possibly to have a viable place in contemporary South Africa, although this is more of a concern for individuals who seek to directly empower others deemed to be in need of empowerment. At these workshops, Jill is primarily dealing with concerns of the self, they are about people addressing their own creative needs, which are intricately tied to their personal needs. Creativity is presented as being a way through which people can discover themselves, which was presented at Thupelo and is now being taken as being essential to a very different group in South Africa. In a similar way to her roles at Greatmore and Thupelo, Jill is in a position of authority, and her role is to be a liberator, to unleash the participants from their conservatism. And as at Greatmore, where she drew an enormous amount of respect from Alex, she has the same reaction over the women at

her Image-Making workshops. Jill does this by taking them seriously, both their creative potential and their personal pain; moreover, she assumes that they have both. This is very comforting to many of these women, seeming to legitimise their own needs to be consoled and allowed to them feel the victims that they desire to be. This effect in turn impacts on Jill's own desire to be taken seriously and to have a position of authority, which has been more of a struggle at Greatmore (see chapter 5).

Making and Psychosocial Betterment: An Example

When Johannesburg Art Foundation (JAF) first opened, it was considered to be similar to Ruth Prowse School of Art in Cape Town, which had been established in 1970. In this section, the current outreach classes at Ruth Prowse will be considered, which has clear objectives concerning the benefits of art-making to various people in Cape Town.[4] Ruth Prowse is similar to JAF in that there are outreach classes specifically for people from so-called communities and separate classes for those who can pay to learn a craft or creative skill, which in practice tends to mean wealthy white women. Mignon organised Ruth Prowse's outreach programme and part-time courses, and explained that these women wanted "to make something of their lives". This is similar not only to the participants of Jill's workshops, but also for many participants from JAF who attended part-time courses. Verna, an artist from the Bag Factory had taught jewellery making at JAF until it closed in 2001, and felt that these participants who were mostly white women were supporting the fulltime (black and mostly male) students, but that they were neglected. Verna felt much sympathy for these part-time students, recognising that they "didn't have anything better to do", but that "these white elitist women were the bread and butter of JAF, they were the means to the end" (personal communication 8th May 2003). Verna believed that there were problems with the last director being too fundamentalist, because he wanted to teach underprivileged South Africans and did not want to be looking to the needs and interests of white women. Verna explained to me that this director, who was black, was very frustrated by part-time classes being dominated by wealthy (white) students. Verna, like Jill (the costs of the Image-Making Workshops go back into the SANG Annexe) and Mignon, all see the benefits for other groups that can come from taking

[4] The outreach programme is separate to the full-time courses in fine art that is the main focus of the school. The school is a few minutes walk from Greatmore, and some full-time students aspire to attend Thupelo and Greatmore (personal communication with Sizwe 7th November 2002).

into consideration the interests of the elite. To take this groups' interests seriously is considered to enable them to have fulfilled lives, achieved through art-making, as well as making funds available for other groups who are deemed to be less fortunate, also to benefit from art-making.

Mignon had been teaching at Ruth Prowse since 1997, when the Outreach programme was started, along with two other part-time teachers, they taught papier-mâché and screen-printing to selected groups of people living in black and coloured communities. Mignon strongly believes in art as a means to helping people, having sympathy for both white women and black/community students, but while these two groups are both being empowered, they are not taught together. This might be a matter of payment, for whites pay fees, but it is more probable that it is a consequence of the perceived differences between the two groups. Participants at the part-time courses, were for Mignon, about bringing meaning and fulfilment to privileged but empty lives, while she ran separate classes for people from the "communities" or "grassroots" as she preferred to call them (personal communication 17th March 2003, see also chapter 1).

A new class is made each year with about 25 participants who come once a week to a space at the back of Ruth Prowse. I attended the class during the beadwork phase in their year's course; they also learned potato-printing, papermaking and decorating ceramics. Mignon has a network of contacts with community organisations in the Cape Flats and townships, and she recruits participants from these as well as from the craft fairs that she goes to, while there are still others who want to develop skills that they can teach to others. Mignon explained that she has two main groups attending, one from Mitchell's Plain (coloured) and the other from New Cross Roads (black), that she made one from each group befriend one in the other group to avoid cliques being formed. It is worth noting that this class was the only occasion during my research where the majority of black participants were women, but it is not coincidental that it was also the one project that was not about making art, for the emphasis was instead on making as craft. While there seem to be many who come as a result of attending other community organisations, which assumes the accumulation of certain skills prior to attending the outreach programme at Ruth Prowse, there is something special for Mignon when helping someone who has no skills:

> To work with someone who can't even greet you when they first arrive, and by the end they are a beautiful person who has self-respect, learning respect for the studio-space [...] It's lifeskills that you give them, to respect others, to respect the work that they make and themselves. (personal communication, 17th March 2003)

Mignon explained that she found it most satisfying to be working at "the grassroots"; where she teaches people to use their hands, which will make them "employable and self-sufficient through making beautiful things". Craft skills and lifeskills are inseparable here and Mignon spoke a great deal of providing skills that can be used by themselves but that can be passed onto others, and the importance of "imparting knowledge" to others, that she is learning to pass this onto others. Mignon is also keen to be passing on love to the participants, she explained that during the classes she tells jokes and hugs people a lot so as "to enable the participants to leave behind the stresses of the townships". During one session I hear Mignon saying, "we love, we nurture and we get there", which is said in reaction to the participants who are struggling with their tasks, and comes to be a means of expressing patience. The class I attended was working with very small beads, threading them so as to make a bracelet that is made of beads that are secured next to each other, the width of eight beads across. This requires learning a formula as well as demanding patience and good eyesight. Mignon needs to show sponsors what has been made, and is a bit worried because of the difficulties in making the beadwork, but reassures herself that "they understand that we are learning". Participants are not allowed to take their work home, thus they are not able to reflect and contemplate their work in the way that Anthony advised (see above), this maybe due to the demands of sponsors to see results, but it is also a way of maintaining control over the participants, of checking their demands.

During the classes that I attended, there was an emphasis on producing work that could be sold, to one's local community and to tourists. The notion of Africa was used for both as a way to focus the direction and choices of what to make. But as well as the obvious idea that African goods sell well, the importance of making them for the makers was also alluded to. Mignon explained that we make beadwork, "because beading is part of who we are", which is a slippage, for while this makes sense

according to the principles of Warnier's "praxilogical approach to subjectivisation" (2001 and see chapter 1) where self-making is achieved through doing; it has been reduced to a formula typical of psychosocial intervention. Moreover, it is reminiscent of the kind of improvement activities that were discussed in chapter 2, and is also problematised by the recognition that these beads came from Europe (personal correspondence with Picton, 3rd June 2004). But this process of making beadwork is learned and undertaken through repetition, through the learning of a formula. During one session I made a beaded bracelet with a few others who were having trouble learning the "formula" for working with small beads. While one participant, Lydia, congratulated me on my bracelet, saying that it looks very African, Mignon spoke of the individuality of each of our bracelets, despite having advised us to use particular coloured beads and stick to a pattern. This confusion over notions of individuality and community, yet also the belief that the two can be realised together as long as there is order and discipline is a paradox that bears similarities with the issues that Greatmore was grappling with (see chapter 5). It is this order and discipline that is considered to enable a knowable self to be realised, but Mignon also told me that this process is very therapeutic, that when making these bracelets, she just likes to "let it happen". Again this is therapy enabling the realising of individuality, yet simultaneously requiring concentration, or rather adherence to certain prescribed formulas, ensuring manageability.

The ideal of lifeskills and its relationship to art will be looked at in more detail in the next section, but it is important to see the compatibility that the notion of lifeskills has with the practical emphasis that Ruth Prowse has in general to art-making and learning. While the courses that are oriented towards paying, are explained as being for "anyone wishing to unlock his or her dormant creativity in a supportive and fun-filled environment" (brochure 2003), the Outreach Programme focuses more on the directly practical benefits from making craft, namely that you can sell it, that it is a means to self-sufficiency. But it is still to be taught in a therapeutic supportive and fun environment that will make the participants feel loved, (which is also understood as being a form of therapy). There is a general understanding of art being helpful for all, similar to JAF and Thupelo/Greatmore; art is deemed to be therapeutic and thus beneficial to those making art/craft. However, the emphases vary according to the intended audience. There does seem to be a preference for focusing on craft when

working with "communities", while Jill can talk about Jungian analysis being essential when working with privileged white participants. How art, as something that is good for you is explained is a matter of degree, while all focus on the bringing out of something that is already in you; hence the preference for talking of facilitation/facilitators rather than teachers that will also be apparent in the following section.

This section has looked at art-making that is presented as being therapeutic, as a means to achieving meaning and purpose to ones' life, and is held to be relevant to both black and white South Africans. But these workshops and classes have been mainly popular with white South Africans, and at Ruth Prowse, there was a distinct divide in place, and the classes that Ruth Prowse allotted to people from the "communities" leads us to the next section which is concerned specifically with the empowering of another vulnerable group, children. The possibility of sustaining a sense of equality between the facilitators and participants will be considered, as will the practices involved.

Lifeskills and Art-Making: Who's Helping Whom?

This section is concerned with the ability to feel empathy and sympathy for others who are less advantaged, and as was discussed in chapter 1, women consider themselves to be particularly apt for this. Not only are women considered to be familiar with the struggle for self-determination, but they are also thought to be better able to empathise with others, intuitively and organically (Hogan 1997: 35). Alex Argenti-Pillen (2003) and Deborah Mindry (2001) have both considered the appeal to middle-class women of helping others, and have hinted at how these interventions have more to do with desires of the interventionists, rather than procuring any significant material changes at the "grassroots" (see chapter 1). As has been discussed in chapter 1, education is deemed to be a virtuous endeavour. How to turn these desires into effective help was the challenge for Sara who facilitated a workshop for facilitators.

Facilitation is a useful term for it aptly conjures up the idea of bringing out qualities or aspects of a person's self that it already contains, but are lying dormant and need to be awoken; a person needs to be made aware of these qualities that are within them.

These qualities include communication, conflict resolution, problem solving, self-concept enhancement and stress management (see Rooth 1995: 2 for further qualities); these are deemed to be necessary for the successful contribution to society that is a consequence of becoming a "whole" person. The focus on facilitation holds that everyone has these qualities, and merely needs to be made aware of them through a variety of (mainly) group activities. In line with this egalitarian principle is that everyone has the potential to be both teacher and student, or more politically correct terms: educator and learner. That we all have something to teach and learn is believed to reflect the democratic and inclusive culture in post-apartheid South Africa. Despite qualifying statements that attempt to distance lifeskills from pop psychology (for example Rooth 1995: 4), its ability to be different from pop psychology is often not apparent. This is because of its interest in participants revealing their "selves"; while its quasi status means that it can be implemented by anyone who feels that they are in a position to empower others. Notions of trust, empathy and identity forming are held as being democratic principles that are integral to the well-being of people, and are also intrinsic to a particular notion of the individual self; the therapeutic self. As such, lifeskills concern the learning of emotional language and an empathetic approach to learning (Pupavac 2000), that openly celebrates the importance of being vulnerable (Rooth 1995: 3).

Sara, a US citizen, spent three years working as the visual arts coordinator for CAP, while her husband was carrying out research about the TRC. Sara did not have a work visa, as her purpose was to accompany her husband, but worked as a volunteer at CAP to occupy herself while her husband worked elsewhere. She had practised as an artist before coming to South Africa, and put her skills to use at CAP, finding that it was not necessary to have a teaching qualification to be able to teach art. Sara taught visual arts and also got involved in fundraising and organising the gallery and CAP clearly benefited from her enthusiasm. What is specifically relevant to this chapter is a workshop that Sara organised and facilitated before she left South Africa for the Institute of Justice and Reconciliation, an organisation which many people from the TRC work with, who are striving to put into action principles and suggestions made by the TRC. This workshop was called "Dialogue: Creating Encounters Through the Arts". What is important to note is that this workshop was very appealing to mainly white women and that there was no need for professional

training; enthusiasm and the declaration of wanting to empower were sufficient for inclusion.

The workshop aimed to explore how the arts could be used as a means of dealing more creatively with problems experienced by children, and as a means of bypassing verbal boundaries, the aim being that it will form part of the lifeskills schools curriculum in 2005. The participants were practising artists[5] and joined one of three sub-groups depending on whether they were visual artists, writers or performers. Within these "labs" participants worked with one or two others to brainstorm "exercises" that could be used with children of different ages; these exercises were to introduce ideas such as responsibility, identity and empathy, notions that are central to lifeskills. Examples of these include group activities; one suggested using objects to build a large communal sculpture, elements of which would have names of individuals in the community, which was meant to encourage development of relationships, understanding and responsibility. While another exercise that was considered to develop the same three qualities, required participants to make an "object diary", where they would each decorate a container to personalise it, and then after the explanation of how symbols worked, participants would be encouraged to find or draw objects which relate to an experience they had had, which could then be shared with others. This introduction of symbols is also considered to encourage the "externalisation of thought and emotion"; this is considered to be a critical ability to enabling you to have empathy with others and be an open and honest person. That art-making in a group is considered to bring this about is what motivates the participants at the workshop organised by Sara. However, Pupavac warns, "external intervention and the professionalisation of emotional communication may unwittingly undermine the sense of intimacy necessary for communal and family bonds" (2001: 368). "Professionalising intimacy" in such a way as has been described, involves an attempt to perceive intimate relationships as being in need of being managed.

The ideal of community is manipulated to incorporate notions of healing and sharing through revealing/confessing, which deem the projects to be virtuous endeavours, yet they also risk unleashing, perhaps even encouraging feelings of vulnerability and

[5] Including six artists from Greatmore, among whom Patricia led the visual arts lab.

trauma through the demand to expose the inner self. Sara conceded to me that the visual art lab was the least successful of the three, yet the appeal to this kind of endeavour for some people remains very strong, giving it the potential to be a quasi TRC influenced project imposing certain standards and expectations onto others. Sara also told me that white women dominated the visual art lab (personal communication 13th January 2003), which is connected to the needs that we have seen white women addressing at the workshops described above. The desire to be empowered and taken seriously as an artist but also as women who have experienced pain/trauma, is also felt to legitimise their wish to involve themselves in other people's empowerment and recognition and healing of trauma (it is assumed others have felt). Workshops such as this one organised by Sara are attractive to such women, and it gives them a feeling of power as they feel that they are responsible for the empowerment of others. It also gives them access to other's secrets – believing that they have the ability to empathise with them. Sara is aware of this, even explaining in a letter concerning the exercises, "given that much of the material does have a therapeutic quality, in order to be effective, it needs to be undertaken in a safe place. The teacher or facilitator must feel confident leading people into the exercises where difficult issues may arise" (Group email letter, 2nd September 2002). This is an important concession, but what is at issue here is the appeal to this kind of enterprise to certain people, namely middle-aged white women.

At the heart of this appeal is the belief that empowering others is a means to empower oneself, as such I consider it to be similar to the desires among participants attending the part-time courses at Ruth Prowse or Jill's workshops; for the aim of being a participant or a facilitator is gaining a sense of purpose both for oneself and for others. Mignon explained, "it is beautiful to feel that you have made a difference, to have made people feel *whole* again" (my emphasis). Feeling "whole" again is something that is the aim for both the groups that Mignon works with (namely white women and black/coloured people), but it is also something that is important for her to feel about herself. Believing in art/craft as a means to create a strong sense of self in others, also secures this for the promoter as well. Robson spoke of the "amazing journey and discoveries" he has had since facilitating CAW. That art is understood to be a means of carrying out this kind of work on transformation of selfhood, while the facilitation of this transformation is understood to be a skill that we all have, acts as an assurance

that it is possible for someone to empower others. It is this faith in art-making as a benevolent force that cuts across the self-imposed/conceived differences between the workshops that have been described in this chapter.

Conclusion

What has been considered in this chapter has been the implementation of psychosocial intervention as a contemporary form of philanthropy or pastoral care and that this is particularly appealing to white women. This chapter has discussed various facilitators, showing that psychosocial intervention does not threaten the position of white South Africans as the primary proponents of pastoral care. The very fact that fellow whites might also be recipients of this intervention is considered to be evidence of the equality to be found among all South Africans. However, the inclusion of children – as recipients of this intervention – renders the enterprise as suspect, for this form of intervention shows up the enterprise as intrusive and exploitative of those considered to be vulnerable. This also alludes to the special ability of women to be able to work with vulnerable groups due to their supposedly unique ability to empathise with others (hooks 2000: 377).

Robson's workshops are believed by most observers to be the epitome of managed workshops. He comes to be a convenient scapegoat, enabling for the others to see themselves as participating in liberatory endeavours, despite deploying the same contradictory messages. That Robson was male, comes to be another way of conceiving of feminine virtues as different, less intrusive and domineering, and that Anthony is seemingly able to embrace more typically benign feminine virtues explains his popularity. The belief that as a facilitator promoting this discourse, you are bringing it into being, is a very appealing position to have; it is a position that confirms one's own importance. Facilitators find themselves in positions of authority, and their own interests and aims influence how best they balance concerns for their own selves and concern for community/society they purport to be helping. Chapter 2 considered the connection between pastoral care established by missionaries during the colonial era, and this chapter has further drawn on this "drive", and its appeal to white women. This "drive" ensures the important and valued contribution that whites believe they can offer to a new multicultural South Africa.

This chapter has also dealt with the specific relationship that an individual is believed to have with the images and artefacts that they produce, considering the alleged power of art-making to bring about well-being, to individuals, to members of a community as well to professional artists. It is held that through art-making it is possible, or indeed a prerequisite, to knowing oneself and being a well-functioning individual in society. Participants are expected to adhere to and understand that art is vital to realising a confident, self-assured individual who is able to empathise and belong to a "community". This involves following certain rules, adopting certain ideas and being prepared to put one's trust in the facilitator, which is expressed through sharing one's intimate feelings while also limiting one's questioning of what is happening. This is considered to be a way of ensuring that art can be egalitarian, which is also possible due to the denying of an intellectual or critical engagement with art and the workshops, this concern will be continued in the next chapter when I consider in detail, the fallacy of revolutionary rhetoric that is frequently deployed by participants as well as facilitators.

Chapter 7: Possibilities for Realising Community Through Transcending "Comfort Zones"

Introduction

The previous chapter looked in more detail at the appeal of psychosocial intervention among various actors in Cape Town's art community. This chapter will consider further characteristics of the phenomenon, particularly the importance of dialogue as a witness to individual transformation but also communal belonging. This chapter considers the need to challenge oneself, to resist the assurances that may have been established through the initial discovery of one's uniqueness but which becomes one's "comfort zone". Freedom (which is also understood as "well-being") is considered to be achievable through transcending one's comfort zone; which becomes an eternal quest. It is not enough to find an art form or technique that "speaks to and for oneself", for once discovered, there is a demand that it be subject to experimentation. Extending oneself through experimentation is held as a means to achieve greater well-being, and it is art-making, conceived as a means to initiating dialogue, that enables artists to extend themselves. Art-making is considered to facilitate conversation and self-exploration, even "becom[ing] your voice" (Voyiya, quoted in Dahan and Finn 2001). This is to evoke a notion of interconnectedness, and it is in dialogue with others that personal and communal realisation are considered to occur.

The saliency of verbalising this dialogue is such for it is considered to be evidence of achievement of change, of personal transformation. Here it is dialogue rather than simply the presentation of art works that enables personal changes to be acknowledged and assessed; it is the witnessing of dialogue that allows for a shared acknowledgment of self-transformation. While inner dialogue with one's work is considered to be crucial, it is to be externalised in a group context so as to be witnessed by an "expert". While this is to recognise the importance of dialogue in human interactions (Holquist 2002: 40), it also evokes a deep suspicion of art-making's ability to lead to "correct" transformations. The distrust of images to speak for themselves is an inversion of the other extreme that advocates images speaking for themselves as was discussed in chapter 2. It is similar to, and indeed a consequence of, the distrust of acknowledging material differences between participants of multicultural workshops, as has been considered in chapter 4. This denial is a tool of psychosocial intervention that deems all people to benefit from the same model of

intervention. But it also illustrates the importance of exegeses, whether as dialogue or as visual art, and their ability to form a community. Community comes to mean, "to bear witness", to bear witness to emotional confessions which are considered to make up a new multicultural community. There is also a deep suspicion of dialogue itself, which demands that it is kept to emotive expressions, thus community comes to be conceived as emotional connectedness.

This final chapter will endeavour to bring together themes that have been considered throughout this thesis, while drawing out the significance of art and its alleged relationship to selfhood and wellness articulated by many of my informants. This will include the contradiction between art-making as a means to discover one's uniqueness, and also the belief that this discovery, known as a "comfort zone", needs to be constantly challenged. This evokes a quasi avant-garde like notion of heroic discovery (Wood 1999: 30), conjuring up expectations of individualism and self-making. However, this chapter will consider how this rhetoric rarely means to "push beyond comfort zones" in any literal way, instead becoming a mantra of conformity. The phrase is also used, although in a far more subtle and cautious manner, to refer to one's socio-political environment, and it is this understanding of "comfort zone", and the ambiguous relationship that many participants are going to have with their respective zones, that concerns this chapter. To declare that one is transcending one's comfort zone is employed as a means to placate antagonism and to display one's affinity with others, but the rule of crits[1] in which such dialoguing takes place, do not necessarily demand material evidence of change. Nevertheless, "dialogue" is considered to be the medium for this alleged liberating enterprise to occur, and is taken as a means to achieve "true" learning, for both individuals and collectives. As was discussed in chapter 1, Paulo Freire has influenced this understanding of dialoguing:

> In order to understand the meaning of dialogical practice, we have to put aside the simplistic understanding of dialogue as a mere technique. [...] On the contrary, dialogue characterises an epistemological relationship. Thus, in this sense, dialogue is a way of knowing and should never be viewed as a mere tactic to involve students in a particular task. [...] I engage in dialogue not necessarily because I like the other person. I engage in dialogue because I

[1] The notion of "crits" is commonly used at art schools.

> recognise the social and not merely the individualistic character of the process of knowing. In this sense, dialogue presents itself as an indispensable component of the process of both learning and knowing. (Freire quoted in Macedo 2004: 17)

However, Freire's understanding of dialogue has been interpreted in a particular way, which has been described by Donaldo Macedo as engaging in an "overdose of experiential celebration that offers a reductionistic view of identity" (2004: 17). This has the consequence of leaving identity and experience removed from the problematics of power, agency and history (ibid.). Opportunities for dialoguing to occur in Cape Town are often curtailed by concerns not only of racial sensitivity (as described by Lasch-Quinn 2001), but also the very problematics of power, agency and historical inequalities which dialoguing (as described by Freire) seeks to address and challenge. Abstract art is often identified as being the successful outcome of effective dialoguing, and the producing of such work is held as the key to being a successful artist. This chapter will endeavour to show that using abstract techniques and declaring affinity to the accompanying status of individuation it incurs, conforms to bourgeois notions of the individuated self (see chapter 2), rather than a transcendence of stereotypes and inequalities.

The Self as Envelope

Vuyile is a black artist, who was also the education officer for SANG, during my time of research. Vuyile has strong links with Greatmore and opened the regional Thupelo workshop during my time of research (see chapter 4). He is popular with Greatmore's management, who consider him to be passionate about exposing people, particularly children to art, and his own explanations concerning the vitality of art consolidate their own concerns with the intricate connection art has with a person's well-being. Vuyile advocates the need for artists to "push beyond comfort zones"; a comfort zone being where one's acts and experiences are familiar to oneself. It is a reassuring place, but in order to develop as a person as well as an artist, it is necessary to extend one's experiences and actions outside of this zone. Artists can extend their comfort zone by experimenting, by striving to literally "push beyond their own comfort zone" (Vuyile 5th October 2002). Describing the psyche as an envelope enables not only for the conceptualisation of someone's identity/uniqueness/psyche to be contained within

something,[2] but also the potential for this container to be expanded, to open it up to new things. Although Vuyile's phrase is "pushing envelopes", what he is referring to is envelopes as containers that restrict creativity. Activity within this zone does not exert oneself creatively. "Pushing envelopes" means expanding one's envelope or even "exploding it", taking the risk to break the seal of the envelope and experience new territory even though it might be uncomfortable. Vuyile considers that it is also possible to expand one's comfort zone by being exposed to art, that this is a means to extend (psychic) envelopes. For Vuyile, art shows us a means to overcome struggles and negotiate realities while discovering depths of oneself in the process; it has an emotional, personal impact. Art provides people (both its maker and its audience), with a means to negotiate "intersubjective relationships" (Warnier 2001: 14).

The CAW that was described in the previous chapter had a crit on the final day led by Vuyile. Vuyile started by explaining the difference between criticism and a critique, that the latter is constructive discussion, before turning to talking about each participant's work. The framing device that Vuyile employed to carry out the crit is the metaphor of the comfort zone, assessing whether a participant has extended beyond their own comfort zone or not; using this tool, Vuyile was able to be very critical. Vuyile knew most participants and their work from previous CAW workshops and from CAP, and it is on this basis that he judged whether someone had moved out of their comfort zone or not. Vuyile told Phyllis that her work is typical of a black artist, that another is making art that is very decorative, while Manzi is making work that is automatic, that he is not extending himself. And while Vuyile spoke of the connection between art and the maker, he did not curtail his criticism on the basis that criticism could be personal, which is a predicament that the next section will deal with. While Vuyile was using a metaphor that has been used to explain and guide therapeutic endeavours, Vuyile did not appear to be particularly cautious in his leading of the critique at CAW, in stark contrast to what is described below. But what is similar are the aspirations involved, the artists considered to be pushing the most were the artists who were producing, not only different work to what they normally did, but this new work was not "decorative" or predominantly realist. What these

[2] Conceptualising the self as an envelope has been considered by Anzieu: "skin provides the basic fantasy from which a self can be built, as a psychic envelope open to outside exchanges, verbal and non-verbal [...] the skin is a screen onto which the psychic life of the self projects itself, and an envelope which contains and protects it". (Warnier 2001: 14).

artists were producing was work that could be identified by Vuyile as coming from within themselves; the work was an exegeses of their interior selves. This art can be characterised as aspiring to be individualistic.

While Vuyile was very critical about many artists during this crit, his chosen metaphor of the comfort zone finds itself very popular or compatible with the aims of Thupelo with its therapeutic influence. In Vuyile's own words Thupelo enables artists to discover themselves: "this does not mean that you have lost yourself, and then that you find yourself. But it is that you discover the depths of yourself – people may understand you in a particular way, then at the workshop you go beyond what has been established for you – the area that you didn't know, that can only be found by experimenting, which you are only able to do if you do not have to please others" (personal communication, 10th November 2002). It can be seen that this is similar to Jill's own discussions of "extending oneself" and "comfort zones" during her Image Making Workshops (see chapter 6) and opening speech at the Thupelo workshops (see chapter 4). Taking risks is possible through feeling safe in the environment; if artists are uncomfortable they are more likely to stay within their comfort zone. Jill Trappler was concerned to explain that Thupelo was a safe place within which to experiment (see chapter 4). This concern with art, depths of oneself and extending oneself are also therapeutic appeals that can complicate the practice of critiques. The need to "push beyond" while also feeling safe is a classic dilemma of psychoanalysis, and it is this endeavour to negotiate or balance these two concerns that this chapter is concerned with.

"Dialoguing with Our Work"

It is thought to be through dialoguing that one can resolve the tension between this virtuous quest for self-betterment by breaking out of one's comfort zone and the simultaneous belief that any work that one makes is an expression of oneself. Dialoguing in this context is carefully managed, while still claiming to adhere to its revolutionary potential. In explaining the significance of dialoguing, bell hooks quotes Vietnamese Buddhist monk Thich Nhat Hanh: "In a true dialogue, both sides are willing to change. We have to appreciate that truth can be received from outside of – not only within – our own group [...]. We have to believe that by engaging in dialogue with another person, we have the possibility of making a change within

ourselves, that we can become deeper" (in hooks 2003: xv – xvi). Dialoguing is understood to anticipate and confirm life-transforming events, acting as the realisation of shifts in thoughts and actions, which are characteristic of therapeutic enterprises (see chapter 1). How possible such shifts are in multicultural settings has been considered by Donaldo Macedo, particularly the use of dialogue in such contexts: "by overindulging in the legacy and importance of their respective voices and experiences, these educators [and crit leaders] often fail to move beyond a notion of difference structured in polarizing binarisms and uncritical appeals to the discourse of experience" (2004: 18). Moreover, this interpretation invokes a romantic pedagogical mode that "exoticizes' discussing lived experiences as a "process of coming to voice" (ibid.). Such a process is evasive of the legacy of social injustice in South Africa, fixing difference while simultaneously ignoring it through privileging the individual, and individual experiences of liberation, which is also to evoke one's innocence. It is this ability to retain one's "whiter than white" (Steyn 2001b) persona that is the concern of this section, for this is where "comfort zones" remain firmly in place, a consequence of ignoring material differences and inequalities.

Central to the therapeutic paradigm, and the notion of dialoguing with one's own work, is that it needs to be heard and witnessed by others, and this is what makes dialoguing confessional, and thus allegedly life-transforming. The conflict between a desire to have an emotional reaction to one's own work as well as others' work, and the fear of emotional reactions is considered to be resolvable through the process of managed dialogues. This therapeutic quest is similar to the issue that will be considered in a later section of this chapter, that of reconciling the need to "push beyond" which evokes a quasi avant-garde quest with the demand to externalise this move through the shift from producing realism to abstraction. This quest is equal to the bourgeois expectations of individuation, just as the declaration to "challenge oneself" is to embark on a journey towards self-knowledge. Both notions are concerned with "absolute self-creation" (Krauss 1997: 157). Dialoguing is also held as being the means through which community can be realised, and in South Africa, with its legacy of apartheid, this takes on an avant-garde like notion of its own. To have dialogues with others is considered to be revolutionary, but, precisely because of this, it needs to be managed and made safe.

Bill Ainslie taught Jill and Mary-Ann at Johannesburg Art Foundation, and both were very influenced by Ainslie's teaching and means he had of engaging with other peoples' work (see chapter 3). It is to Ainslie that both attribute their concern that art should reflect the maker's psyche, but also the importance of critiquing the work only, and not the maker, during crits. As has been discussed in the previous chapter, Jill was very influenced by Jungian thought concerning how art produced is intricately linked to the inner self, and Mary-Ann conducted her own teaching along similar lines. Mary-Ann had taught portraiture at JAF after going to classes taken by Ainslie when she was 15-16, after which she went to life-drawing classes, modelled and spent time with the Ainslie family, before teaching in Ainslie's studio when she was twenty. Mary-Ann spoke of Ainslie as being her mentor, interpreting his teaching method as being "pretty impersonal, cool but he addressed himself with great respect to each artwork, not on a personal level, not interrogating the individual" (Mary-Ann, 15th February 2003). In practice this discourse is complicated by the simultaneous requirement that art be an expression of the maker; thus to address oneself to an artwork is to address oneself to the maker of it.

Mary-Ann led a crit at Greatmore a few months before the international workshop began, having been recommended by Jill. It was suggested that 8-10 artists could participate, and those who were interested were asked to sign up beforehand. Mary-Ann later identified this crit as an "art forum that was a process modelling dialogue with another artists' work as a way of dialoguing with [their] own work". The importance of "dialoguing" with other peoples' work as a means to engage in dialogue with one's own work provided the impetus for focusing the day, along with Mary-Ann's overriding concern that criticism was not to be personal. Dialoguing with art is not, as Susan Sontag explains, works of art talking literally (2001: 10), instead it suggests a communicative meeting between beholder and object. What Sontag is calling for is for us to "recover our senses" (2001: 14), "[w]e must learn to see more, to hear more, to feel more" (ibid.) when responding to artworks. This call for a sensory response to artworks supports the therapeutic desires that are contained within a particular expectation of "dialoguing", which privileges emotive and therapeutic longings. However, while this notion is supportive of Mary-Ann's use of dialoguing, to take it literally would be to ignore the anxiety that she felt about a

genuine "unleashing" of emotions, which might threaten participants' respective comfort zones.

During her introductory talk to the crit at Greatmore, Mary-Ann explained that she wanted "us to immerse ourselves in the work, that it will be talking to and from the work, the work is the basis for discussion, not the people, that this will develop a discourse". She followed this by saying that she would talk a lot, that this was a way to encourage us to talk about work, other peoples as well as our own. The purpose of this was because "we need to have an inner dialogue with our work, and that sometimes it is difficult to dialogue with our own work because we are so close to it". At another point in the crit, in an effort to encourage others to talk, Mary-Ann said that "we should try and put questions into words even if it is very personal"; this is a distinct diversion from her advice that we were to focus on the art, not the maker. It is an encouragement to be therapeutically engaged in the work being discussed, which is considered to be a means through which anyone can be brought or coaxed into a position where they can engage with the work. It is this that is considered to be egalitarian, for it is maintained that we are all capable of having emotional responses to art. Being able to voice these allegedly universal emotions is held as enabling an artist to recognise the emotional responses that they themselves will have toward their own work. But it is also to create routes for communication and knowing between people; emotionally literate individuals are considered to be able to create connections with others. This external input is intrusive, and so in an effort to diminish this intrusion, it is repeatedly held that we need to be sensitive, to be respectful, to focus on the art, while it is the encouragement of emotional investments in art (both one's own and others) that provides evidence of one's insights into or understandings of art.

It is worth noting the way that when Mary-Ann talked about her own work at the international Thupelo workshop (see chapter 5), it was from a very personal position. During her slide show, Mary-Ann spoke of her work as consisting of ways to face problems, "of feeling inhibited, of feeling too much pain". Mary-Ann refers to one of her pieces as her attempts at " trying to use some freedom, wanting to work with mark-making, to lose myself in the process, to not be judgemental – worrying whether it is art or not". These descriptions are extremely personal, explaining Mary-Ann's reasons to try certain things as being a consequence of the impact that her emotions

had on her, of how she *felt*. All participants (at Thupelo and this crit) were expected to have a commitment to art being an expression of one's psyche, including the expectation that even the process of making art is one that is filled with emotions that contribute to the art being made. Jill and Mary-Ann both used this therapeutic technique, which they would both consider was learned from Bill Ainslie, as a means to not only structure, but also to make meaningful the workshops and the crits within them, making them non-hierarchical, due to the assumption that everyone has feelings. But there is a second dimension to this, for if someone is exposing how they felt about the work that they have made, or are making, it is difficult to be critical of that, so by supposedly making herself vulnerable by being so personal in her discussion of her work, Mary-Ann managed to protect herself from criticism. The leadership role that Mary-Ann had was one that sought to make use of the seductive appeal that therapeutics has, particularly in relation to vulnerability (see chapter 1 and 2). The language that Mary-Ann used during the crit invited emotional responses from the participants, which has consequences for the content of criticism.

Mary-Ann conducted the crit with a similar degree of seduction that Jill Trappler employed at her Thupelo introductory speeches and her Image Making Workshops; Mary-Ann spoke of someone's work being "incredibly open and generous, that we are part of the process, we complete [the work] by looking at it". This reasserts the necessity for group intervention in someone's work, for it is in such an environment that someone can consider whether "I have pushed the work so that it talks", just as it is only in a shared environment that someone can consider whether a work is "true to me". This seduction seeks to connect people to their artwork and also to connect them to a therapeutic understanding of their work, why they make work and how to decipher this work. The primary means for achieving this is "dialoguing", externalising one's inner self through making art is not enough to be able to understand oneself, it needs to be further deciphered though dialoguing, through talking and analysing and applying the marks that make up the content of the art, to experiences and feelings that the maker has. This has clear connections with the early Thupelo workshops, where the making of work that was "true to oneself" was made in a group environment, with a drive to articulate this to others. This tradition has been intensified by the therapeutic turn (Furedi 2004a), sensitivity training (Lasch-Quinn 2001) and the fall-out of the TRC, the combined consequence being that

emotional intelligence is prioritised over intellectual analysis. This more recent shift has impacted on the drive to pursue the realisation of the art one makes being true to oneself, for it now also acts as evidence of one's emotional literacy as well as the exploding of one's comfort zone. These recent developments have been implemented under the influence of psychosocial intervention, endowing them with moralistic meanings that go beyond the ability to practise art-making freely, to ones that strive to make interaction meaningful.

There was a very positive response from the artists to the crit, with many joining the group as it went to the different studios of the artists who signed up, to hear and contribute to the dialogue. During the presentations that artists gave about their work, there was much enthusiasm for getting feedback, for receiving opinions about their work and others'. The responses from artists were formalised in reports that the artists were asked to write as part of the official report that would be passed onto the organisation which funded the crit. These all spoke encouragingly of having the crit and spoke positively of organising more crits; two such views were voiced by two academically trained participants, Mthi and Sebe. They differed as to whether the same facilitator should continue leading them in an effort to build up a relationship with her, including individual sessions with her (Mthi), or each crit should be led by a different facilitator in an effort to bring a variety of debates to artists work (Sebe). Other reports considered how it felt to be participating and talking to a group about their work; feeling proud of their achievement, Manzi wrote that he wanted to become comfortable talking publicly about his work, and that this had been a good opportunity to become more used to doing so, while Clint spoke of his satisfaction with talking to others about his work. Patricia wrote that she was particularly pleased that Zola, who had informally joined the participating audience, asked her a question about her work. For Patricia, this was evidence of the ability of the crit to break down barriers, enabling artists to learn about each other in a safe, constructive environment, similar to the favoured interpretation of Thupelo (see chapter 4). The responses show a very real wish for interaction, debate and communication between artists, that were central to the concerns of the first Thupelo participants. However, such an outcome is dependent on the ability to negotiate therapeutic endeavours into ways that meet the needs, such as stimulation and education, of artists working in such environments.

The potential to make crits meaningful to different participating artists is held as vital (see chapters 4), but this diversity, while being crucial, needed to be managed, and the interaction was carefully controlled at the various crits. The lack of "real" conflict is necessary for it does not endanger the power dynamic, it is not threatening; crits are presented as being "challenging" while not being critical of the maker, resulting in a lack of analytical debate (as witnessed at Thupelo, see chapter 4). Instead, what these crits sought to achieve was the realisation of a therapeutic environment that confirmed therapeutics as a means to negotiate race dynamics, art discourse and crits themselves. In striving to locate the self emotionally, other means of conceiving of self-identity in terms of socialisation are ignored, for relating to others comes to be demanded through emotional connections. This is a shift from embracing multiculturalism (that is at the heart of the aims of crits), to a defensive, introverted denial of difference. Melissa Steyn has shown how this denial of difference acts to protect discomfort that might be felt about relating or empathising with "other" people (2001b: 108), and further more, can be conceived as being an expression of political correctness. To individualise and therapeutise someone's contribution to a crit is to ignore broader social issues (see Lasch-Quinn 2001: 80). Empathy comes to be a means by which people can feel that they connect to others, thus its popularity at crits, which are organised by white South Africans, but which enable such realities and other socio-political differences to be ignored.

Abstract Painting and "Radical Subjectivity"

The necessity of being able to negotiate the dominance of psychosocial intervention has been considered in previous chapters. In the final two sections of this chapter we will consider the impact of therapeutics on abstract painting or more specifically, gestural painting in relation to voicing explanations about the work one makes. Abstraction has been considered in chapter 3, and I shall return to it now because of the continued appeal that it holds for different groups in Cape Town. This first section will describe the philanthropic environment within which "growth" into individuated artists takes place. I will begin by considering the intervention of Manfred Mueller Preuss, a German philanthropist, before turning to the appeal of abstract work by various artists at Greatmore and its apparent compatibility with psychosocial intervention.

As was discussed in chapter 3, abstract art (as a form of modernism) has been held as being universal. It was used to claim a common humanity, and much of this had to do with privileging the act of making art, of the process involved; "a profound and internal process, a confrontation with the material, with the space, with the dimensions of the canvas, etc" (Powell 1995: 19). This is "radical subjectivity" (ibid.), that is the assertion "of painting as something that happens in a primary relation of the artist's consciousness to the medium" (ibid.). Powell continues that this is a powerfully personal thing, that it is an intense assertion of the self, moreover it is a notion of the self that is an expression of individuality. This is a dissolution of the self as socially constructed, for as Powell explains, "the meaning and the mythology of modernist abstraction lie very largely in the creation of meaning around the idea of process, in the discovery of the self in and through the material" (ibid). As such, there is a demand that this individual experience is translatable, that the individual shares their self-journey with others. Abstraction, as a means to realising selfhood, is required to be translated or explained through dialoguing, and it is from this act, that it acquires a social role, overcoming the conception of abstraction as being "radically resistant to translation" (Powell 1995: 20). Moreover, it is this act of translating that takes away mystery and the potential threat of the unknowable.

Manfred Mueller Preuss is an artist who has lived in South Africa, but returned to Germany some years ago, becoming a politician and businessman as well as a practising artist who is well networked with other artists in mainland Europe. Manfred has also maintained an interest in South Africa, particularly Cape Town and its opportunities for art education and opportunities for black artists. Manfred had been involved in fundraising for CAP for a couple of years, including donating the proceeds from the sale of one of his pieces to CAP, when he had a solo exhibition at Josephine Mill Gallery, Newlands, Cape Town in 2000 (artthrob.co.za/00nov/listings-cape.html). Two months before I arrived in Cape Town, Manfred had held a one-week workshop at CAP for 12 visual art students who had graduated the previous December, called "From Representational Painting to Abstraction", which culminated in an exhibition and a competition. Manfred explained that the intention of the workshop was to "guide young South African artists, who generally work representationally, towards a freer form of expression and to enable them to gain what is usually their first experience with abstraction. The conscious goal is a change or at

least a variation of the 'form' language that has been used so far". It is worth noting that the title itself explicitly refers to a one-directional journey of growth, the end aim being to become an abstract painter.

The exhibition was held in SANG Annexe, and Manfred used his ability to access Cape Town's social elite, to invite such individuals to the exhibition, such as a Swiss heart surgeon, who then commissioned Donna (the only woman and one of the three competition winners) to make art for the Heart Centre at Groote Schuur. Manfred was proud to tell me this when I met him during his trip to Cape Town in November, he also showed me some examples of the works made that were being stored at CAP. During the workshop each participant was given three different sized canvases (large, medium and small) upon which to make his or her abstract paintings. The judges of the exhibition included Estelle Jacobs, director of the Association of Visual Arts in Cape Town, and Sue Williamson (see chapter 5 for the relationship of these two judges with Greatmore). The winners included the only female artist, Donna, Conner and Manzi (from Greatmore). Williamson described the judges choice being because "they showed the most mastery" (www.artthrob.co.za/02may/diary.html), but it is not surprising that the only female participant would be chosen. The three won an all-inclusive five-week trip to Europe that was funded by Pro Helvetia (the Swiss Arts Council funded the Visiting Artist Programme at Greatmore, see chapter 5), visiting Switzerland, Austria and Berlin, where Manfred had properties and where they would meet a number of artists and visit art museums. In Villach, Austria, at the start of the tour, the artists made abstract paintings under an awning in the main pedestrianised street, with Manfred, while CAP's director, Graham joined them for that part of the tour, to photograph the "workshop" and passer-bys' reaction to it.

When I first met Manfred he was at CAP, to donate artwork consisting of seven panels, made by the three winners during their time in Europe, and to be hung in the entrance to CAP. Graham said it "looked modern and sexy and that it will be great for the new look for CAP" (see chapter 2). For while CAP was from the same era as Thupelo, which considered abstract art as a liberatory way of making art, CAP was mostly associated with figurative political works and derogatively associated with producing Township artists (see Younge 1989). Through connecting itself to this newly commissioned abstract work, it seemed that CAP was striving to push out of its

own comfort zone. While notions of community are still invoked, for its ability to present virtuous quests, it is clearly no longer a concept that is associated with the political struggle. Instead, community consists of individuals realising themselves and then each other through the guidance of their emotional growth and development. The work that was donated to CAP, symbolised this new direction or focus that privileged individual well-being and freedom. This is freedom of the self, rather than group or political freedom, and symbolises freedom to experiment, where free expression is considered to be discernable in abstract art.

On returning from their "European tour", Manzi, Conner and Donna gave a talk about their experiences to the visual art students at CAP. All three held a very high regard for their host, Manfred Mueller who seemed to have assured them that abstract work was the way to become a "true" artist; this is abstraction as they witnessed it in Europe. Their reasons for this are reminiscent of how the participants of the early workshops experienced it: "this was my first experience of doing abstract painting. I think it is the other side of me. It expresses my feelings" (personal communication, Donna 11th September 2002). On making work at the original workshop, Conner explained "the week was a great challenge for me. I had to break away from realism. Honestly it was difficult. I had to use my fingers instead of my brush to gain freedom of expression. I not only discovered a new style but I found a way to reflect my true emotions". Manzi spoke of being able to now trust himself to make abstract work, as well as articulating that this was his "first time to do abstract painting". What was clear from all three, was their understanding that while abstract art was European, it was also a means to find one's own style, that through making it, they were going to be more successful as artists. This is similar to early Thupelo workshops (see chapter 3) and Jill Trappler's method of art teaching; combining the Modernist tradition, with a (implicit) notion of African spontaneity and a therapeutic concern for art reflecting the depths of an individual (chapter 4 and 6).

> It gave me confidence in myself and taught me that a real artist has to be strong enough to take criticism. [Manfred] showed me that personal strength comes from within. I used to be shy about my work, but not anymore. I'm proud to be an abstract painter. My work should be shown in the places that ordinary people inhabit, not just galleries. (Donna, wall panel, exhibition, *Ukuzoba* March 2003)

This explanation contains much of value here, for it not only speaks of the power that abstract work allegedly has on the maker, creating self-assurance and a stronger inner self, but also the growth that comes from abstract work that can then enable you to be strong enough to accept and adapt to criticism.[3] Like Vuyile, Donna believes that this art will have a similar power over anyone who sees it, hence the importance of showing it to "ordinary people". While Donna is probably referring to black and coloured South Africans, this appeal to a Western innate universal inner self is to "claim a common and identical humanity" (Powell 1995: 19). While the significance of making this abstract work outside, under (a white) public gaze, might be to confirm the universality of this inner-self/spirit; it becomes an exciting visual display of black artists working – which is not something which would be so stimulating if it had been white artists working in public. This performance of making abstract work in public was considered to be provocative and innovative, leading to the inclusion of the photographic documentation made by Graham in the *Ukuzoba – back to the Future* exhibition in March 2003.

During his visit November-December 2002, Manfred held an informal workshop in a spare studio at Greatmore for one day, bringing paint and canvas for the three artists from the European tour. This workshop was to follow up the work/progress that was made by the three at the initial workshop and during their trip; the work consisted of using thin paint and often using a stick rather than a paint-brush to drip the paint into the canvas, even pouring the paint straight from the container. Manfred was also making such work, which was reminiscent of Thupelo, where artists from different backgrounds would experiment with abstract work. Gestural painting and the process of making this kind of art, as in drip-paintings are perceived as an expression of the self. Gestural painting is individualistic, it is about making one's own marks, through very physical movements of the body, even using one's fingers, using bright colours (that are very satisfying), it is also about using the whole surface of the canvas, and the way that the composition fits together is therapeutic (Elsbeth Court, personal communication, 9th June 2004). This technique is motor-driven, it is about working very fast and not conceptualising what one is making, it is literally a process of making the painting up as you go along and was described as "play" by other users of

[3] This is despite criticism being so restricted in Cape Town's inclusive art community.

this technique (see next section). This gestural painting (or drip painting) was often made in Studio One at Greatmore, but also by many artists at Thupelo, being understood as epitomising the notion of experimenting. This work is "about painting, about what it means to put marks on a surface and to frame it in a particular space, about the materials you use to do that and how they determine what you can show and the process of showing it" (Myerscough 2004: 24). Yet the desires to interpret this making process, to understand the resulting images as being a reflection of the self is considered a means to strengthen the works' importance. For a work of art to contain a deep connection with the self is to give it sincerity.

Fig. 7.1. Manfred working at Greatmore

Terence arrived at Greatmore late on into my time of research, but had been at CAP in the late 1980s, where he had learned life-drawing, lino-cuts, painting and sculpture. Terence sold his work through Everard Read (a very exclusive gallery, with a long history in Johannesburg, and had recently opened a gallery in Cape Town), yet wanted to "push" his work, and felt that Greatmore allowed this to happen. Not only is this because of the opportunities to work alongside others (he was sharing Studio One), motivating each other to work for long hours, "when at home I might give up after one or two hours", but also through exchanging techniques. This exchanging of creative techniques meant that "my work is changing almost every day, I don't know what will happen tomorrow; creativity might change". Terence explained that at the moment he was "working from what I see – working from pictures and references, not from what I think. But I'd like to work more from what I think, to extend human

imagination". Although selling successfully, Terence still had this desire to affirm for himself, that he was a "true artist", by making abstract art, art that is made from one's head, not from observation, not reality. Art that is produced from what is in one's head, rather than from observation, and expressed as abstraction, is very appealing to many among the new generation of black artists in Cape Town. Terence was currently experimenting with newspaper, incorporating it into his paintings, and explained that this was therapeutic, making him feel good and liberated (personal communication 28th April 2003). This use of the word therapeutic is taken to mean the impact that using particular creative techniques has on oneself, making it possible to feel an intimate connection with one's inner self, and the resulting feeling of satisfaction is described as being therapeutic. The sensory experience of making is verbalised in terms of its therapeutic impact on oneself.

A group exhibition at Greatmore, featured the work of Moya, Manzi, Thando, Phato and Sizwe, who had graduated from CAP with the four sharing Studio One, and was studying at Ruth Prowse and made work informally in Studio One (see chapter 5). *Why Cry?* featured a combination of abstract and figurative pieces by all the artists "two contrasting bodies of work, from the controlled technique [to what Thando described as] my splashy works" (Norma, opening speech, 22nd November 2002). The exhibition opened two weeks after Manfred had held his workshop at Greatmore, and the spare studio where he had held the workshop contained many abstract works by Conner, Donna and Manzi. Manfred attended the opening, as did a number of other Europeans visiting Cape Town, who brought work. Again, there was much interest in the work displayed and piled up in the back gallery from the follow-up workshop Manfred had held, and there was a photo album of the "European Tour" on display in the gallery that was looked through with amazement. The main exhibition took place in the gallery, Studio One and both the entrance hallways. The exhibition was opened by Norma (from Regional Thupelo workshop, see chapter 4); her opening speech addresses much that has been discussed in this chapter so far, and is worth quoting at length:

> This exhibition brings together under one umbrella five quite distinct identities. Each of these artists all with their roots at CAP, have been courageous in remaining true to their passion for making art in an obviously challenging environment. Over time and through different workshops, art institutions and in

> nurturing residency spaces like Greatmore Studios, have persistently pushed beyond the comfort zones of what they know, eager to develop and expand their skills, exchange ideas and grow in the vital feedback in the company of other artists. The risk-taking on an artistic level is inspiring, but even more when you realise how much personal investment and integrity is inherently part of what provokes these artists to express intimate concerns and aspects of themselves through their art. (Norma, Opening speech, *Why Cry?* 22nd November 2002)

It is an artist and individual of integrity who expresses their inner or "deeper level" (ibid.) through their art, and Thando explains that it is "the freedom of more abstract techniques which stimulate a different flow of ideas and creativity". It is important to note the continued appeal of abstract art, which is considered to allow an artist to grow, and while Thando made a clear distinction between his representational work (which he sold) and abstract work (which was solely for personal expression and growth), Manzi and Moya combined the two in work that they sold. Their paintings often consisted of an abstract background in pastels, chalk and paint, with figurative scenes in the foreground, but even these were kept distinct from more experimental work, often involving drip-painting. As was considered in chapter 3, this individuated self is considered to come into being through the practice of abstraction; it is through this medium of exegesis that freedom comes to be personified in the individuated self. However over recent years, since Thupelo has been in Cape Town, this move from realism to abstraction has been expressive of a social evolutionary trajectory that privileges the bourgeois self as the goal. Whether at Vuyile's crit or Manfred's competition, what is to be presented is conformity to the bourgeois individuated self, thus, while to "push" oneself is seemingly to evoke the avant-garde artist on the edge of society, the physical presentation is to be one of allegiance to societal norms. To draw on the notion of the avant-garde (see chapter 3) is simultaneously to draw on ideas of transcendence, of "going beyond" as were discussed in chapter 4 and which have been discussed further in this chapter. Sizwe articulated art as a "spiritual practice", which is achieved through exploring and experimenting, where "nothing remains the same for too long and [where] one should keep moving through and beyond the comfort zones you inevitably find yourself in" (personal communication, 7th November 2002). Greatmore and Thupelo with their focus on exchanging ideas with others, are considered to enable artists to expand beyond their comfort zones and express the depths of one's spiritual as well as artistic integrity; while both evoke bourgeois respectability.

In Cape Town's inclusive art community, the notion of the avant-garde and therapeutic (or mystical) desires to evoke self-growth are extremely similar, and have been described as being realisable through the act of making abstract work. Such acts are accompanied by affirmative declarations such as "transcending comfort zones", which need to be voiced to others so as to confirm their liberatory worth, which is different from having a revolutionary potential. Art-making as a means to liberation alludes to the realising of bourgeois selfhood, which is conformity to an individuated, and thus, manageable self. As such, it is a continuation from the attitudes expressed in chapter 3, where new black residents to urban areas were thought to make art as a way of coming to terms with their loss of familiarity that was supposedly communal, to accepting individuated identities, necessary in urban environments. In both cases, self-realisation is to be guided by white intervention. The interests of the philanthropic organisers of competitions and workshops, are premised on moralising discourses concerned with the empowerment of young black artists, which, as chapter 5 described, created such interest in Greatmore. The realising of individuals conforming to expectations of bourgeois sensibilities, is appealing to the philanthropic support given to such endeavours. To bear witness to such declarations of liberation is held as being witness to the realisation of empowerment.

Fig. 7.2. Thando's "splashy work"

Playing and Discovering the Self

The previous section discussed the role of abstract painting as a means by which young black artists have felt able to express themselves as professional artists. This belief is apparent in this section, while giving particular consideration to the notion of play as a means to experiment and in turn, to express oneself, which is popular with white female participants of Thupelo and Greatmore. That abstraction is taken to be a result of a "confrontation with materials" (Powell 1995: 23) is considered to consist of a confrontation of the inner world with the external and material world. Making abstract art in particular is considered to be a means to both explore the inner self and externalise it (see ibid.: 19), and turning to this technique, which is considered to be a form of "play" is often chosen, as a means to find and explore one's inner self. During one school holiday, Patricia brought one of her daughters (about 9 years old) to Greatmore with her, and set up a workspace outside with paint and paper and proceeded to play with her daughter. Ute, a visiting artist, was working in her studio close by, and while taking a break having felt frustrated by what she was working on, was invited to "play" with Patricia and her daughter. Ute turned down this invitation, feeling that it was not an appropriate way for her to solve the difficulties she was currently experiencing (personal communication 12th October 2002). Playing, as articulated here, is about trying to work through problems intuitively rather than analytically, and this is what Ute was rejecting.

Patricia also used the word play in relation to working at Thupelo, which resonates with other peoples experience or interpretation of the Thupelo workshops; Sonya at the regional Thupelo workshop, titled one of her pieces "Play", while another was "Piecing Myself Together", the first title evokes a notion of experimentation, while the second, a need for sincerity. Sonya also explained that she felt inspired by the work that Alex's young daughter, Nombeko was making, who participated at the workshop after school. Mary-Ann on her own work, also talked of "playing" during her slide show at the International Thupelo workshop while simultaneously demanding that her, and others' work, is taken and interpreted seriously through her crit rules. Beth at the regional Thupelo used the term play, as a defensive means to avoid been criticised, while enabling her to have a therapeutic understanding of the "new" ways in which she was working (see chapter 4). As a means to engage herself in her creative process at the regional Thupelo workshop, Marie chose to make a

series of pieces using her own handprint; articulating it as "playing". These are all examples of white participants following the notion of spontaneous artistic expression as a means to liberate themselves, as well as to have serious credibility as an artist, indeed the two are believed to be intricately combined. This belief finds itself most compatible with the style of crits that I have discussed in this chapter as well as Thupelo and the workshops discussed in chapter 6, and is also confirmed as valid through a therapeutic emphasis on the purpose of crits. Here, moving out of one's comfort zone enables one to get in touch with oneself, to know oneself therapeutically.

Fig. 7.3. Marie using her handprint at the Regional Thupelo Workshop

Gestural painting is considered to enable the maker to reclaim "innate composition" (Elsbeth Court, personal correspondence, 9th June 2004), to feel whole, or holistic again. Becoming holistic again is considered to be possible through experimentation, which is in turn considered a form of play, which is also considered to be similar to the notion of African spontaneity. This brings us back to the notion of abstract art as child-like. A reviewer of Cy Twombly's work, recently explained that to the uninitiated, "there is something childlike – or childish, depending on where you stand […] all those doodles and squiggles, all that smearing and smudging" (O'Hagan, 25th April 2004). Like the drip-painting technique described above, making this art requires the involvement of the body in a process of "symbolization", whereby "a subject introduces into his psychic envelope his experiences of the outside world"

(Warnier 2001: 13). Warnier explains that innate composition is discouraged at school, and is suppressed in favour of realism:

> The pleasure experienced by children in drawing usually comes to an end when adults impose upon them outside canons of verisimilitude that prevent the child from using the image as a means of symbolizing his/her own experience of the world as perceived by him/herself, that is, transformed into something acceptable. The adults and especially the school push the child into a representative dead-end. (Warnier 2001: 15)

For many (including the participants of Jill's own workshops), to produce images through play is to reclaim one's spontaneity and authentic creativity that has been supposedly suppressed through demands and pressures to conform to expectations of others; this might be as artists, but it is also felt to enable an escape from societal oppressions, such as patriarchy (see chapters 4 and 6). The highest accolade comes in the form of declarations of freedom and liberation, which are romantically linked to the experience of childhood, which can be regained through creativity.

The anxieties that some facilitators expressed over the need to be sensitive during crits while encouraging notions of embracing images and the process of making them, are given a worthy explanation by Warnier, who suggests that "totalitarian systems suppress critical discourses while immersing people in motricity, material culture and images" (ibid.). While I am not suggesting that these workshops are in anyway like totalitarian regimes, there is a similarity in the necessity of policing criticism while simultaneously encouraging the sensuous "unleashing" of creativity. A further disavowal occurs with the evoking of intuitive or spiritual explanations for creative production, which marginalize material contexts. As was discussed in chapter 1, some theorists consider the work of young children to be similar to the work made by adult professional artists. This "U-shaped curve of development" (Gardner 1990: 21) considers that "both populations are willing to explore freely, to ignore existing boundaries and classifications [...] for each of these groups, the arts provide a special, perhaps unique avenue for personal expression" (1990: 21). It is to be recognised as an artist from this description that many participants at the workshops that have been discussed here hope to achieve, it is the realisation of one's intuitive creativity that is authentic expression and therefore the most genuine form of expression. And because it is like creative expression produced by children, there is no need for intellectual

analysis; in fact this would be detrimental to creative expression. This becomes a convenient defence against any questioning of one's motives and intentions, leaving one devoid of responsibility, in a similar way that victims are also devoid of responsibility. Both categories are deemed to be beyond responsibility, but to be acting naturally, in ways that cannot be challenged, and which have the potential to unify South Africans, via the unleashing of one's inner child and (assumed) experiences of victimhood.

Conclusion

For many including the founders of Thupelo, abstraction has been a means by which artists can be liberated, as abstraction is held as a way for the innate inner self to be expressed or externalised. As a result of playing or experimenting and producing abstract work, the psyche was considered to be externalised, which is considered to be universal. That one's artwork is an expression of oneself is held as being universal, but this personal expression needs to be challenged by others so as to develop, and it is out of exchange with others that deeper self-realisation is considered to be possible. It is here that a reason for the curtailing of critical exchange is apparent, couched in the mantra of being "challenging but not personal". The privileging of emotions, in multi-racial contexts when criticising work, takes precedence over the possibility of engaged dialogue. This acts to manage white ambivalence of a black presence, while also protecting white participants from being *truly* challenged by this black presence. When this is not adhered to, as at the international Thupelo workshop (see chapter 4), those who are challenging others are in the wrong, for being too esoteric if they were white (or not black), or for being too angry if they were black. Thus, what is important is the *managing* of emotions, so as to maintain the status quo and everyone's respective comfort zones. It is from this superficial series of comfort zones, that the development of an inclusive community is believed to be possible; a community which is conjured out of "swinging" (after Lasch-Quinn 2001: 56). Swinging is a means of declaring and sharing of emotional literacy (or confession), which comes to be divorced from individual material circumstances, and consequently is conceived as being a means by which people can relate to each other.

Sontag tells us that "[b]y reducing the work of art to its content and then interpreting that, one tames the work of art. Interpretation makes art manageable, conformable"

(2001: 8). This idea of taming art, of making it knowable, and conformable is what is hoped for at the crits, but here it is to diminish the art's power and by implication of art's intrinsic connection to the maker, also taming the artist. This is in direct contrast to the description by Chabani Manganyi (in chapter 1), of the revolutionary power of art. Such art is transformed from criticism to benign encouragement that is dependent on (white liberal) support. Moreover, this gives white liberals a role in the healing processes of other South Africans as laid down in the rules of psychosocial intervention. To accept criticism for what it is, would be to accept that South Africans, particularly black South Africans can empower themselves, which would include intellectual empowerment with the confidence to challenge the (white) facilitators, teachers, gallerists, whose teaching, facilities and discourses are the means by which most black artists in Cape Town gain access to the possibility of being professional artists. In many multicultural artistic contexts in Cape Town, criticism is submerged within a structure that deals with difference through growth and affirmative appraisal. This ideology of self-empowerment and the celebration of difference is heralded as being "the most radical avant-garde thought" (Lasch-Quinn 2001: 230) by its proponents, yet it emphasises coming to grips with difference, not transcending it. "Pushing" as advocated by Vuyile at the beginning of this chapter, is not to transcend the boundaries of what is known, as is the aim of avant-garde thought, but to confirm and fulfil the expectations of bourgeoisie individuation; while his crit was open to criticism, the aim was still bourgeois respectability, rather than being revolution.

A more optimistic understanding of dialogue is offered by Michael Holquist, who suggests that dialogism is based on the primacy of the social, and the assumption that all meaning is achieved through struggle (2002: 39). This is the result of conceiving of dialogue as having a tripartite nature, which is composed of an utterance, a reply, and a relation between the two. This, for Holquist bears within it the seeds of hope:

> The thirdness of dialogue frees my existence from the very circumscribed meaning it has in the limited configuration of self/other relations available in the immediate time and particular place in my life. For in later times, and in other places, there will always be other configurations of such relations, and in conjunction with *that* other, my self will be differently understood. (ibid.: 38 original emphasis)

The relation between the utterance and the reply is where the opportunity for community lies; it is what cannot be controlled, and is the space where hope for community resides. Community needs to be recognised as a volatile phenomenon, where "meaning is achieved through struggle" (Holquist 2002: 39); to recognise this is to embrace the unknown, and the transcendence of comfort zones. It is to recognise dialogue as community, in a dialectical relationship with art-making and self-making.

Conclusion: Risk-Taking and Belonging

In this thesis I have sought to consider the barriers to realising an art community in Cape Town that can be both inclusive and demanding, on the understanding that this can initiate socio-political change. Greatmore Art Studios and Thupelo are part of an exciting and innovative international network of artists (TAT). I have argued that to understand the local characteristic of TAT in Cape Town, it is necessary to consider how a quasi-therapeutic intervention has come to orientate the aims and expectations of Greatmore and Thupelo. Examining the role psychosocial intervention has in the running of Greatmore and Thupelo, has drawn to the fore the means by which such interventions impact on conceptions of art as a moral project and beneficiaries of this understanding. Greatmore, Thupelo and the other workshops and schools described here are the means by which black artists in Cape Town have access to the means of becoming professional artists. Just as it is also the means by which white people (professional and non-professional) can "unleash" (Law 2000a: 13) their creativity. While this is to present a multicultural or even a non-racial environment, through examining the minutiae of interactions within and between the organisations discussed here, inequalities become apparent.

This thesis has proposed that psychosocial intervention has become a means by which conscientious white residents of Cape Town have been able to conceive of their contribution to a multicultural or "new" South Africa. These individuals belong to that portion of the South African population known as "white English-speaking South Africans, or WESSAs" (Salusbury and Foster 2004: 93). Their adherence to psychosocial intervention as it manifests itself in various projects consolidates their sense of being "social leaders in South Africa – soothing intergroup conflict and promoting South Africa in the global arena" (ibid.: 108). Through my critical engagement with this self-justifying rhetoric, I have argued that intervention has come to be confused with interaction. Pastoral care and its perceived compatibility with women and feminine virtues, which when examined come to be associated with white women, seemingly legitimates intervention, but fails to account for shifts in the manifestation of power from white men to white women. Women are considered to have an innate nurturing role, which is also very appealing in building a new nation, and psychosocial intervention, as a female domain, is seemingly extremely pertinent

in the realisation of this project, while maintaining respectability in the white community. The characteristics of psychosocial intervention have become a means by which white power can be perpetuated, through the notion that whites have something very particular to contribute to a "new" multicultural South Africa. As has been discussed in this thesis, this has the effect of reifying whiteness, of supposedly purging it and restoring its innocence.

A second theme to emerge from this thesis has been the means by which psychosocial intervention has perpetuated and enforced the status quo. As Melissa Steyn explains: "the ideology of white privilege has proven to be protean in its ability to configure and to reconfigure, under different and changing circumstances, while keeping its fundamental tenets in place" (2001a: 99). Key to this has been the strict limitation of criticism and analysis, while deploying frequent use of rhetorical declarations that claim to be avant-garde in their potential for change. The utilising of quasi avant-garde notions proves to be a fallacy, for radicalism comes to be incompatible with perceiving people as victims. Writing of the shift in black consciousness that "sought to radically transform the black people's perception of their situation in South African life" (1981: 168), Chabani Manganyi considers that "as an emergent cultural, political and spiritual force, it was radical and emphatic about the need for blacks to outgrow the victim status and offer in its place a consciousness and ethic of hope" (ibid.). Therapeutic aims come to cushion opportunities to implement radical agendas for political, economic and social change in South Africa. Victimhood is realised through individualising experience and through privileging an emotional understanding of the self. Voicing criticism in contexts such as Thupelo, where cross-racial interaction is encouraged, would be radical precisely because it would undermine or invalidate the understanding of the self as vulnerable, which is the phenomenon upon which belonging is premised. Yet, the lack of critical black voices in Cape Town's art community is symptomatic of the understanding that to be an individualised emotive self is key to being a successful artist, and perhaps most significantly, it is also the means to gain support of the white gatekeepers. This therapeutic conception of selfhood is equated with the bourgeois self, and another central theme explored has been the compatibility this notion of selfhood has with the act of creativity.

Creativity has been caught up in the need to justify itself through demonstrating allegiance to realising the new and democratic South Africa, claiming to bring about both social inclusion and self-knowledge. Art-making has come to be considered as a means through which self-realisation, self-fulfilment and self-transformation can occur, and are given a more tangible and immediate meaning through the language of psychosocial intervention. Associations with Abstract Expressionism and the relation that it has with the maker come to expose this relationship at its starkest, and go some way to explain the continued appeal to Abstract Expressionism by both black and white participants of the various workshops described. Non-figurative art privileges the process of making (after Rosenberg 1960) and is extremely compatible with the quasi-revolutionary rhetoric of psychosocial intervention. What is particular about the situation described here is the use of avant-garde rhetoric of reaching into the unknown and challenging complacency – while what is actually being reached for and externalised is the allegedly universal quest of an inward looking search for individuation.

Abstract art is conceived of as a way of advocating universalism and hence inclusivity, but Jacqueline Rose reminds us that "universalism is always historical – always this or that universalism, never universal in itself" (1996: 61). Evoking universalism in 1980s South Africa was to assert a political statement about resisting suspect biological differences between the races imposed by the state, but has recently been evoked in order to *remove* political struggle, and in its place to assert an alleged sameness, which is rooted in an embracing universalism. It is to release oneself from material constraints (simplistically classified as Western), which is appealing to white women (and men) seeking personal liberation and black (male) artists seeking to be recognised as professional autonomous artists. Both are united, not only in the physical proximity of the workshops, but also through the belief that art-making is contributing to self-esteem building, and the understanding that this leads to well-being through the obtaining of liberation and externalising the individuated self. The importance of rhetorical declarations, of empowerment, self-realisation and belonging, are notions shared amongst lifeskills facilitators and artists, and are used to evoke a universalism that is removed from social contexts, but are nevertheless deployed as tools in the building of community. Proximity, necessary for community to be realised, is premised on the producing of an ethically responsible selfhood,

which is understood to defuse collective belonging, even while reifying it. Abstract art enables the individuated self to be privileged, and broader socio-political issues to be marginalized in contemporary Cape Town. This enables notions of the self to be standardised, from which it is considered possible to bring about a collective identity, based on uniformity or compliance.

As we have seen, those who do not conform to this form of belonging are ejected, for they threaten the illusion of racial harmony, indeed their actions assert racial difference in ways which are unnerving for those striving to "sooth" interactions. This is reminiscent of the desire to equate political stability with national reconciliation in contemporary South Africa, which Manganyi explains is a dangerous fallacy (2004a: 55). Yet the appeal to racial harmony, of multiculturalism and of reconciliation is so strong precisely because it glosses over the reality of inequalities that continue to privilege white South Africans. Reconciliation comes to have such importance in South Africa, because it is considered to be the means by which racial conflict can be resolved but also defused. And the desire to avoid conflict, central to liberal endeavours, enables psychosocial intervention to flourish, with its emphasis on managing difference and conflict as well as celebrating a shared humanity. In praising Desmond Tutu for his "sublime pastoral eye" (Herwitz 2003: xiii), and his language that can "speak in the name of an entire nation as diverse and filled with strife as South Africa" (ibid.: 17), Daniel Herwitz draws on a general liberal preoccupation over desiring to feel included and experience a sense of self-worth (i.e. to be the "social leaders" Salusbury and Foster speak of (2004: 108)) in post-apartheid South Africa. This is also apparent in his fear of "reracialization" (Herwitz 2003: 126) and his criticism of Thabo Mbeki for using a language at odds with the constitution that "bends over backwards to deracialize its language and speaks of healing divisions" (ibid.: 102), but who, instead, has brought to attention unresolved racial attitudes and difficulties (Manganyi 2004b: 5). In contrast, Tutu's language or homilies are premised on reconciliation, respect and forgiveness, and are readily understood as being inclusive and are supported by the endeavours of those engaged in psychosocial intervention. This reminiscing about the particular grand-narrative from the drafting of South Africa's democratic constitution is discernable in the ideals and endeavours of those white South Africans who strive to engage with other South Africans; the rhetoric of "Rainbowism" (Gqola 2001: 98) and psychosocial

intervention have become the means for making this interaction realisable and manageable as has been described in this thesis at Greatmore and Thupelo.

In their excellent edited volume on race in South Africa, Natasha Distiller and Melissa Steyn (2004) strive to encourage dialogue about race that will reach beyond the academy into civil society in general (although the project had its beginnings in wanting to address the sense of persecution in post-apartheid South Africa experienced by many white students at UCT), through asserting the understanding of race as a performance. That it is in "the performances of 'race', the live expressions and implications of racialised identities, that the investment in 'race' is located and perpetuated" (2004: 5). Understanding race as a performance allows for the understanding of race as both a process of repetition that constitutes racial norms (ibid.: 10) and individual performances, which "are instructive units of analysis that can reveal acts of identification, reinforcement, concealment and re-creation of racial subjectivities, and/or their disavowal, subversion, 'outing' and deconstruction" (ibid.). This understanding of race allows for a more nuanced understanding of the managing of race and racialised identities where interaction is premised on conformity to certain ideals.

The forms of interactions discussed in this thesis are ones of assimilation, of attempting to control desegregation by reforming otherness (Ballard 2004: 64). That is, of admitting black people into so-called "grey areas" but which can be revealed as white comfort zones because while raced others are desired, their acceptance comes with qualifications. For others are "only admitted if they make themselves acceptable *as defined by 'white' people*" (ibid.: 56, original emphasis), acceptability being defined by aspiring to bourgeois selfhood. This managing of race is also apparent in the mantra at the heart of "Rainbowism", "unity in diversity", which "foregrounds racial variety even as it does not constructively deal with the meanings thereof" (Gqola 2001: 98). This reluctance to engage critically with racial variety, along with the attempts to depoliticise racial variety, are very much tied up with a fear that difference might not be containable if it is given a free reign. To talk about race as advocated by Distiller and Steyn (2004) might well be to acknowledge and/or recognise other forms of belonging that are not containable in the managed template of Rainbowism or assimilation.

Chabani Manganyi suggests that white South Africans need to "cultivate a healthy identification with Africa" (1977: 102), and considers this to be possible through "Africanisation" (ibid.). For as white South Africans emerge from "a fragile identification with Western Europe into new yet unclear identification with Africa, new demands will emerge on the intellectual horizon" (ibid.: 101). Yet the main attempt at realising this identification with Africa has been moulded to be compatible with a white comfort zone. *Ubuntu* has come to be deployed as a means for realising an identification with Africa. *Ubuntu* is meant to be about Africa, an Africa-centred way of conceiving of community and belonging, but its alleged radicalism comes to be removed from the very grounding in "Africa" that allegedly makes it so popular (in its capacity as a quasi-anthropological concept). Instead *ubuntu* is reified, taking on an elusive quality that is deliberately removed from the African context so as to make it "a *philosophical concept* of modern relevance" (Herwitz 2003: xxvi, original emphasis). This makes it attractive to the interests of the white minority who are keen to declare allegiance to newness and Africa (read also community), but not in terms of material change. Instead, there is a slippage to a drawing on liberal humanism to proclaim individualism, where whiteness disappears (Steyn 2001b: 109) along with blackness and is replaced with a notion of belonging based on an idea of universal uniformity that acts as a comfort zone. The universalistic perspective "suffers from being too aristocratic a notion [and] too idealistic in light of local conditions" (Manganyi 1977: 104), but as Renate Holub reminds us, impulses for change do not come from privilege (1992: 189).

So the question that needs to be asked, comes to concern the means by which humanistic opportunities remain essentially "aristocratic" (Manganyi 1977: 104), in spite of declarations of their egalitarian nature. This thesis has noted ways in which art therapy and psychology have been used to account for material conditions, a being-in-the-world, where psychology can be useful to black/oppressed people due to the material grounding of problems. Art therapy *can* be grounded in material contexts, just as dialogue can be. Michael Holquist tells us that "the quickness of experience and the materiality of language are harnessed into a volatile unity" (2002: 63). Yet this is rarely recognised and acknowledged in rhetoric associated with psychosocial intervention. To understand this displacing of revolutionary potential,

the displacing of the balance between consciousness and materiality (Freire 2002: 87), it is worth considering the case of Paulo Freire's writings and how his legacy has been conceived as a means of legitimating and encouraging psychosocial intervention, which as we have seen, is fundamentally at odds with revolutionary endeavours. Freire's writings are often conceived as chiefly meaning the "instilling of humanistic values in a non-repressive way" (Macedo 1998: 5). This ignores the materiality of experience and education, and hence its revolutionary potential. A dialectical understanding of the relationship between the world and consciousness, includes, for Paulo Freire, a recognition "of feelings, passion, desires, fear, insight, the courage to love, to be angry" (2002: 158). This, by Freire's own concession, seems to act as his Achilles Heel; many who are inspired to empower others privilege the sincerity he attributes to emotions. Freire understands *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* continued popularity to be because of the ability to conceive of it as idealistic and bourgeois (ibid.).

Freire maintains that it is possible to defend the humanist position without ever sliding into sloppy sentimentalism (2002: 158). But the appeal of such sentimentalism is great and derives from the attractive notion of the process of becoming fully human. This seemingly justifies a therapeutic emphasis that encourages an avoidance of material conditions, which in turn, assures white South Africans that they have much to offer in the new South Africa. Talk of love (and other emotions), comes to be conceived as a means to be inclusive, through bypassing material conditions. The universal "fact" that all humans have emotions is considered to enable all South Africans to feel unified, to recognise their sameness, yet this mantra upon which psychosocial intervention is premised, simultaneously entrenches difference through the particular appeal it has for white South Africans, where all that is asked of them is to risk "an act of love" (Lasch-Quinn 2001: 224). This difference is further entrenched by the particular appeal among white South African women for expressing empathy towards others through facilitating projects of psychosocial intervention, further asserting white authority and expectations.

Inclusivity has come to be confused with a particular idea of victimhood in Cape Town that conjures up conformity. Such attempts to realise a therapeutic inclusivity are presented with a challenge by Simon Njami, who offers a more complex

understanding of inclusiveness and its relationship to healing and identity through the notion of "unofficial psychoanalysis" (2005a: 55). This speaks of an individual process whereby "one by one they dissect each element that was a prelude to their existence, bringing that existence, a causality over which they have no influence, into contrast with the essence, i.e. what they know they are. Gathering together the scattered pieces of a fragmented personality, they decide, as though elaborating a puzzle, to assemble the elements of an unconscious whose workings they cannot seem to master" (ibid.). This is more complex than the simplistic notions of healing offered by psychosocial intervention, for it expects the individuated self to take risks. But most importantly, it demands an understanding of selfhood to be rooted in "space *and* territory" (Njami 2005b: 21 my emphasis).

Writing of South African artists elsewhere, Njami suggests that they are:

> Condemned to find a point of connection between their lives, just yesterday artificially opposed but in the future necessarily joined together. It is at this price that an entity we can call a nation will be formed. We must abandon the illusion of an ideal world where we will all be brothers. On the other hand, there is no family in the world, no matter how united, that does not have its share of conflict and resentment. That, in fact, is how one recognises a family, in open conflicts in which one does not doubt the integrity of the other, because to do so would be to put oneself at risk, to disown oneself (2003: 34).

Risk, as evoked by Njami, is in relation to the need for sincerity; if one denies taking others sincerely, such action comes, in turn, to be a risk to oneself being taken sincerely by others. This thesis calls for people to be more demanding of each other, to take the *risk* of being accountable, of being open to criticism on the understanding that this is to be respectful of oneself and others, and is where newness can come into being; and to draw on the qualities of art-making as a means to realise this. This is not to deny human fragility, but it is to demand the realising of shifts in socio-political relations. It is to take the risk to judge, to criticise and to receive criticism that a useful contribution to selfhood, to the art community and to community more broadly can be realised, and would entail moving beyond simplistic "rituals of interaction" (Nuttall 2000: 4), which are largely "fashioned by our apartheid past" (Manganyi 2004a: 55). To "reach into diverse realms of collective being-in-the-world: into the struggle to arrive at meaningful terms with which to construct a sense of belonging –

and hence, of moral and material community – in circumstances that privilege difference" (Comaroff and Comaroff 2001: 632) is both an obsession for white South Africans and the task ahead.

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Appendix A – Thupelo Workshops

What follows are two reports that I wrote for Thupelo following participation at two Thupelo workshops.

Regional Thupelo Workshop

The sixth regional Thupelo Workshop was held in the South African National Gallery Annexe, between the 12th and 20th October 2002. The workshop was small with 14 artists, all of whom are working in the vicinity of Cape Town. The workshop enabled the artists to work with other artists from the same city, overcoming some of the feelings of isolation and segregation that artists can experience in Cape Town as well as providing the opportunity to experiment and learn different creative techniques through working in a shared space. The workshop was made possible through the generous funding of the Association of Visual Arts and the South African National Gallery who provided the venue free of charge.

Introductions began outside the annexe at 9.00am on Saturday morning before everyone helped carry the materials for the workshop upstairs to the hall that was to be transformed into a space for creative experimentation. Only three of the participants had previous experience of a Thupelo workshop, and once the space had been prepared committee member Jill Trappler introduced the workshop and gave a brief history and aims of Thupelo. This meeting also gave the opportunity for the participants to introduce themselves and for participants to meet some of the committee members who had come for this introduction and Alex who had fund-raised and organised the workshop. In her introduction, Jill had pointed out that the workshop had already begun with the preparation of the space, and with this realisation participants set up work-spaces. This creating of work-spaces was an important part of the workshop process, many artists taking time to make spaces where they felt comfortable to begin creating.

Many artists had not worked on such a big scale before and there was much intrigue and appreciation of having the opportunity to paint on a large scale using cardboard. All artists painted at various stages of the workshop, while interspersing this method with incorporating different materials into their work, from pink toilet paper to cotton threads and scraps of animal skins into their work. Participants also began experimenting more with other materials as the large rolls of paper/cardboard began to run out. There was also quite a limited supply of paint colours but some artists overcame this by incorporating different coloured oxides into their work. The work produced ranged from landscape paintings and abstract works through to collages, installations and self-portraits.

There was a strong collaborative element at this workshop, the size of the workshop enabled artists to be more aware of each other and each other's working practices, but this was also encouraged by the inclusion of a performance artist, Norma, who created her works through the interactions that she experienced with the other participants. This interaction was expressed in quite a direct manner as one of her main mediums of art-making was poetry, in which she articulated her experiences of the workshop as well as verbalising how she related to the other artists, describing how they influenced her. All artists were interacting and creating in response to each other to varying

degrees, sometimes in ways that were very subtle, with the artists themselves not necessarily being consciously aware of how they were influencing each other.

On the fourth day of the workshop, Jeff was invited into the workshop to lead a walkabout, where artists invited each other into their spaces to talk about their intents, what they were enjoying and any difficulties they were experiencing. It also gave participants the opportunity to express what interested and inspired them about each other's working practices and interests as well as questioning and offering advice to each other. Afterwards artists realised that they were now much more engaged with what each other were doing and as a result many felt able to approach artists in their particular spaces that they wouldn't otherwise have done. It is also important to acknowledge that the walkabout is quite an exposing experience for some artists, but it is just one manifestation of interaction which is at the heart of Thupelo, with its emphasis on opening up and engaging with other artists.

The food budget was very tight due to recent food inflation, but participants generously contributed food as well as to lunch preparations.

There were two school visits during the workshop, the first was a surprise visit from a school visiting the National Gallery from Muizemburg, while the second was a visit that had been organised with Masibambisane Secondary School which is opposite Greatmore Studios. Alex gave the class a brief introductory talk, explaining the purposes of the workshop, and then the students walked around the workshop space, looking at the work being made and talking to the artists. This will also provide a connection from which the students might feel welcome to attend events and exhibitions at Greatmore, where some of the artists from the workshop currently work and others have been associated with.

On the eighth day art-making was finished and the space was cleared and prepared for an exhibition, and over the afternoon the space was again transformed as artists hung their work. The following day there was a very successful exhibition of work-in-progress, bringing about 100 visitors to the South African National Gallery Annexe. There was an opening speech by Vuyile from SANG, who spoke of how the work that had been produced over the last week is challenging to established institutions such as SANG that actually generate our understandings and knowledge of art. This was followed by a spontaneous performance of music and poetry by Garth Erasmus and Norma, performing the poem Norma had written in response to the walkabout. Two drummers played two half hour sessions in the gallery space during the exhibition and there were drinks and snacks for visitors. The work was taken down later on in the afternoon, the participants leaving with their work, bringing to a close Thupelo 2002.

Participants:
Anthony
Beth
Bhola
Dawn
Frankie
Marie
Manzi
Maurice

Moya
Norma
Peter
Sebe
Simon
Sonya

(Published on www.greatmoreart.org)

International Thupelo Workshop

The 5th Cape Town international Thupelo workshop took place at Goedgedacht Trust near Malmesbury between the 6th and 21st February 2003. The workshop was funded by the National Lottery Distribution Trust Fund. The majority of artists were from the African continent apart from three artists who came from Australia, Lebanon and France. The other international participants came from Morocco, Kenya, Congo, Zambia, Egypt and Zimbabwe, while there were 12 artists from South Africa. The final group of participants was not decided upon until after the workshop had started as it was hoped that one artist who was meant to participate would still be able to make it.

Most of the artists met at Greatmore Studios where it was arranged for a bus to take every one who had already arrived through to Goedgedacht in Malmesbury. More introductions were made once we had arrived at Goedgedacht, and the orientations that Jill Trappler would talk about in her speech were already under way. Jill, one of the founding committee members of Thupelo Cape Town and trustee of Thupelo, came to the workshop that afternoon to introduce the workshop to the participants. Jill explained some of the history and house-keeping of the workshop, but it also enabled participants to orientate themselves and consider the purposes of the workshop. Jill drew attention to the importance of relocating yourself physically and in relation to your work, finding references to focus yourself is an important way of doing this. Jill also talked about Thupelo being a contained space and the importance of staying with your work as a way of focusing and structuring the workshop and the importance of talking to the other participants and your work. The advice to "stay with your work" would be important for the participants to consider throughout the workshop as they dealt with distractions, whether these directly related to their work or not. Jill also said that each workshop has its own personality as this one would.

The setting up process offered itself as an opportunity for the participants, newly arrived at the space, to get to know it, while also making it theirs; not only was this a communal studio space, but artists were also able to find spaces within to for themselves to work and a space in which to anchor themselves for the duration of the workshop. Some artists spent the first few days working in different places, finding which places suited them, as they also felt out what work would suit the locations that they were drawn to. The relationship or connection between where the artists worked and what work they made was very evident, from an artist who worked with gold material who on arriving late found a space ready for him underneath a gold plaque to an artist who was using wielding equipment among other tools and he found a working environment that suited his needs in one of the farm sheds. Others shifted to different places throughout the workshop depending on what they were doing at particular times whether this was due to the portability of the materials such as being able to work outside because they were working from a small sketchbook, or it might have been because of the materials and tools that the artists were using. Others worked in different places in order to find an environment that they could work more comfortably while also having breaks from the intensity of the main studio space.

The evening slide shows were an essential part of the workshop, two artists would present slides of their work every evening. This enabled them to show examples of their previous art and to articulate this work to the other participants, as well as

answering questions from the other participants. This enabled the participants to understand more about the art that each other were making now and to contextualise it a broader body of art. Many questions were unexpectedly challenging, which added an important dynamic to the workshop. It was clear to many that from the first couple of days that the participants got on well together, and it is worth noting that this characteristic of the workshop did not stop the critical line of questioning that was typical of the slide shows. I think that it is evidence of the professionalism of most of the participants that this did not have an impact on the general feel of the workshop.

The "walkabout" gave participants an opportunity to explain and articulate the work that they were doing during the workshop giving everyone an opportunity to touch base with what everyone else was doing and wanting to do at this workshop. This was done within the first week, when artists were just getting settled into their work – which led to some resistance by some participants who felt that they were just getting into a momentum of working but it was explained that this was an opportunity to invite other participants into the thinking and the actual process of making their art, it gives participants the opportunity to think about what they are working with and to communicate these intentions to the rest of the workshop.

How the working process manifested itself in the different ways was often reflected in the work, as well as in different artist's understandings of the making process and their aims and objective. Some experienced the process as more important than a finished work.

How people perceived the workshop was very affected by their own personal agendas and their own personal engagement with the work that they were doing and the environment in which they found themselves to be in. It was easy to transfer problems or distractions onto other people or the organisation of the workshop, which did occur when participants were not engaged with their work or felt alienated to a certain extent from the workshop environment.

South African National Gallery Annexe - The exhibition was well received by the public and regular visitors to Thupelo exhibitions, with many visitors coming during the week. But from comments that the artists gave in a meeting to close the workshop, the exhibition was considered to be a distraction from the aims of Thupelo. Some artists became very focused on producing work for the exhibition, even panicking about producing finished work. The selection committee that was set up to help artists decide on what work they wanted to show had an important role, in helping artists to focus on particular pieces for the exhibition, although one of the committee members suggested that this selection process should happen on the last morning, as many people stopped working after their work was selected – this is again evidence of the exhibition focus of the workshop, particularly in the last week. As participants suggested, having an open day at the end of the workshop might be a way of engaging the public with the work and allowing the aims and ethos of the workshop to remain strong.

I would consider Thupelo in general and this workshop in particular to have benefited enormously from the critical discussions and provocative insights that some participants contributed to the shape, character and direction of the workshop. I think that the complaints and feelings of vulnerability were important in shaking people out

of a degree of complacency. I have heard the phrase, "comfort zones" discussed on a number of occasions in relation to how artists work and how they need to be shaken out of this place so as to be able to grow as an artist. How this comfort zone is identified and how an artist moves out of their comfort zone can be subject to questioning. But without the forceful criticism that was seen at the slide shows at this latest workshop I wonder how many artists would have really had to think about their work, to defend it and the reasons why they make the work that they do. Thupelo needs to think back to the early workshops, which installed the characteristics of experimentation and of artists challenging their work in fundamental ways, and to think about how such characteristics can be carried through and truly realised in these current workshops. This is more than a matter of talking about "energy" and "process", for there is always going to be energy of some kind present just as there is always going to be a process involved. Listening to what artists say about the workshop and what their different understandings of what Thupelo is about, will enable Thupelo to remain the adaptable and flexible workshop that it is renowned for; the workshop that adheres to artists needs.

Participants:

Abdel	Egypt
Anthony	South Africa
Ben	South Africa
Beth	South Africa
Catherine	South Africa
Charles	Zambia
Daniel	Kenya
Dylan	Zimbabwe
Hanan	Lebanon
Linda	South Africa
Lizwi	South Africa
Mahmoud	Morocco
Mark	South Africa
Mary-Ann	South Africa
Moya	South Africa
Philippe	DRC
Sebe	South Africa
Simon	South Africa
Suzy	France
Tina	Australia
Zakhe	South Africa

Published in Thupelo Yearbook 2003

Appendix B – Supporting information about institutions and actors

Greatmore Studios

Institutional framework/ Organisational structure

Greatmore is a not for profit organisation that consists of two converted houses in the residential suburb of Woodstock, purchased by two of Greatmore's trustees, Isky Gordon and Robert Loder.

Mission Statement

Greatmore Studios responds to the needs of the Art community in Cape Town in providing individual studios within an interactive environment, to a cross section of artists who have chosen art-making as their career. It provides opportunities to the broader community to become aware of and understand visual arts through outreach and community work.

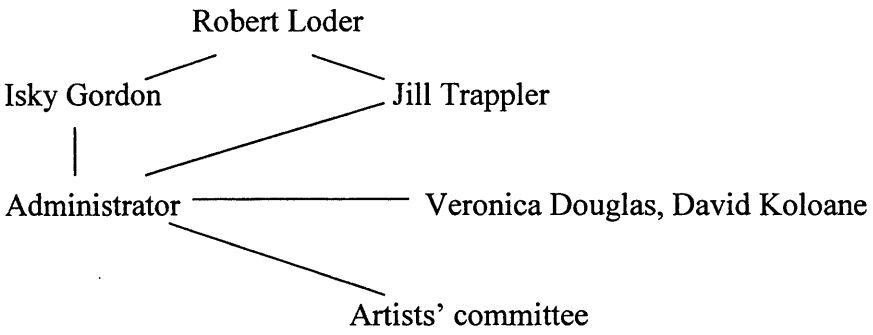
The residency programme facilitates cultural exchange and dialogue internationally and locally by bringing together artists from diverse cultural backgrounds in a working environment where the flow of ideas stimulates professionalism, creativity and productivity.

Management hierarchy

Note: the Greatmore ethos proposes a non-hierarchical structure of this kind:

Artists' committee ⟷ Administrator ⟷ Trustees

In practice, the disposition of power is more accurately portrayed as below:



Trustees

Accountant
Michael Hands

Artists' committee

Funding and financing

Income from studio rental ranged from 250 Rand to 600 Rand.
This was intended to cover day to day running costs of Greatmore.

Ford Foundation – computer room and subsidised use of the internet.
Hivos – purpose not specified.
National Arts Council of South Africa – purpose not specified.
National Lottery – covered the Administrator's salary.
Pro Helvetia – funding for residency programme.
WIGG Fund – allotted to individual artists to cover studio rent.

The residency programme usually required participants to have organised and secured funding from their countries of residence before confirming acceptance of a place.

Biographical details of actors at Greatmore (during time of research)

Permanent Committee members